

Make Room for Daddy

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Make Room for Daddy

by [slashyrogue](#)

Summary

Will stared down at his belly, and then back up at the both of them. “Are you telling me I’m having a cannibal’s baby?”

Notes

Complete.

Chapter 1

Will tapped his foot, annoyed, and felt the urge to pee rise up in him again for the fourth time in less than an hour. He put his hands on his belly, and felt his daughter kick.

“It’s alright, honey,” he mumbled, hating being in this office, “I’m sure everything is fine. They can’t take back the sperm I paid for.”

The Cryos Institute was the largest cluster of sperm banks in the country, and had been highly recommended online. He’d spent months researching the best place to go to find the anonymous father of his baby, and then many more picking the alpha from the series of donors.

He’d been surprised by the phone call, a little distressed truth be told, and now as he waited for someone to tell him just what the fuck he was doing here he tried to figure that out himself.

His pregnancy was going just fine now six months later, and Cryos shouldn’t even be involved.

“So why am I here?”

Will stood, noticing a file on the table in front of the empty chair, and as he reached over the door opened.

“Hello, Will.”

He sat down fast and tried not to look guilty. “Hey, Georgia.”

Georgia had been his case worker since he’d walked into Cryos, and she’d even been there for his insemination. “We---”

The door behind him opened again and he was surprised to see Dr. Alana Bloom, his OBGYN, walk into the room.

“Dr. Bloom?”

She looked oddly distressed.

“Hello, Will. We...”

Will stood. “What’s going on? You...you both look terrified.”

The two women shared a look and Dr. Bloom walked up to Will, taking his hands.

“Will, please sit.”

“Not until you tell me what the *fuck* is going on.”

Georgia flipped open the file on the desk and held up a page. “Will, do you remember the profile you picked out months ago? The...alpha doctor who speaks seven languages, has an IQ of one hundred and forty eight?”

Will nodded, sitting down slowly, and looked at Dr. Bloom. “What’s wrong? Did you get the samples mixed up?”

Dr. Bloom knelt down in front of him, taking his hands. “No, not exactly. You see...have you heard about Dr. Hannibal Lecter?”

He blinked. “The alpha cannibal?”

“Yes.”

“I...wait...”

“Will...”

Will stared down at his belly, and then back up at the both of them. “Are you telling me I’m having a cannibal’s baby?”

“Yes,” Georgia said, sighing, “Dr. Lecter’s been interviewed quite a lot and said a number of things that were found to be lies but he recently admitted to donating sperm in our bank. He offered to prove this and the results came up a match.”

He felt tears in his eyes. “And the one I picked was him.”

“Yes.”

“How many other people did too?”

Alana stood, sighed, and leaned against the desk. “Just you. We’ve destroyed the other samples but we thought it best to tell you.”

Will suddenly felt his belly lurch and quickly someone handed him a wastebasket as he vomited up lunch. His daughter kicked him again and he sobbed, clutching his stomach.

“Will, this....”

He looked up at Alana. “Just stop,” he hissed, wiping his mouth as he stood, “You can’t help with this. You...I don’t even know why you’re even here.”

“Cryos thought it best to have your doctor here in case of....”

“Premature labor?”

“Or just enough distress to bring harm to your daughter,” Alana said softly, “Will...”

“I don’t want to hear anymore,” he said, his throat thick, “I...I gotta get out of here.”

He threw open the door and stared out into the waiting room of potential parents.

“Ask for a background check,” he spat, “You might end up with a monster’s baby inside you.”

Will slammed the door so hard the glass cracked, and as he ran for the car he felt his baby kick him again.

“I know, honey,” he whispered, “I know.”

He got into the car, and began hitting the steering wheel over and over as he screamed. Tears fell down his face as the happiness over his impending fatherhood was gone. This would completely taint every interaction he’d have with his daughter now and for the rest of her life.

Why couldn’t they have just never told him?

Will finally calmed down after a few minutes, wiping his face, and he couldn’t resist the urge to google the father of his child.

Dr. Hannibal Lecter was better looking than Will remembered from the news reports and countless Dateline’s over the past two years since his arrest. He still was interviewed more than some celebrities, and countless books had been written trying to get into his twisted mind.

Will pulled up a few articles, quick reads that took less than a few minutes, and just before he pulled out of the parking lot he read one more because of the title.

COULD THERE BE A LECTER BABY?

The article was, of course, on TattleCrime.com. Freddie Lounds had been granted an interview and been given the exclusive about Hannibal’s donation. She’d even gotten pictures of his mouth being swabbed for a DNA test.

Will felt a chill go down his spine when he read the final quote.

LOUNDS: Have you given any thought to there being a child of yours out there somewhere?

LECTER: Many times, yes.

LOUNDS: That’s all you have to say? No thought to...I dunno...being a Daddy?

LECTER (smiles): Oh I’ve had plenty of thoughts, Ms. Lounds. I think I’d make an excellent father. If there is a child of mine from my donation I would love to meet them someday.

LOUNDS: I doubt that will happen, Dr. Lecter. You are currently serving several life sentences, aren’t you?

LECTER: For now.

Will pulled out of the parking lot and tried not to let the fantastical idea of Hannibal Lecter breaking out of prison get to him.

It wasn't going to happen.

Hannibal had no idea who he was, or about the baby inside him.

He breathed a sigh of relief.

It would be better if he just went back to pretending his donor was just some random pretentious alpha.

Hannibal Lecter, who?

Chapter 2

Freddie Lounds was oddly predatory for a beta.

Hannibal noticed this about her the first time they met when he turned her away, and the subsequent follow up visits where she seemed unable to take no for an answer. He said yes only out of curiosity and convenience. Ms. Lounds was overjoyed at his first interview after the news of his possible fatherhood broke, and he knew she would find out if anyone did choose his sample.

Which was why he knew the minute she walked into the room that someone had.

“I did not expect to see you again so soon, Ms. Lounds. Did our last conversation get that much attention?”

Ms. Lounds sat down in a chair outside his rather large cell, excitement in her eyes, and he wondered again just how she’d gotten inside.

Was Frederick that keen on publicity?

“It did,” she said, pulling out a small file, “Actually I think it’s the most views I’ve gotten ever on TattleCrime, so thank you for that.”

Hannibal began to walk away from her but smiled as he spoke. “You’re quite welcome. Though I am unsure of why you’re here again only weeks later.”

“I wanted to break the news to you first,” she said, sounding more excited with each passing minute, “And get your reaction.”

He feigned ignorance as he turned to look her away again. “News?”

She picked something out of the file and walked over to the glass separating the two of them. He came up to meet her and she pressed a picture against the glass. Hannibal found himself overcome at the sight of the man in the photo, and traced a finger along his cheek.

“This man is carrying your child, Dr. Lecter.”

Hannibal felt such intense pleasure at the words that he felt tears fill his eyes. “I see.”

“I wasn’t entirely sure when I saw him the first time, but he went into Cryos calmly but exited not calmly at all. His...demeanor after his visit made me think he had just been told of his connection to you. I wrote down his license plate and...”

He turned his gaze for the first time away from her. “You illegally obtained his information?”

She looked taken aback by the change in his tone. “I...well I had to, didn’t I? You...you wouldn’t know otherwise.”

Hannibal faked a smile while inside his anger built.

How dare she violate his omega in that way? The vulnerable moment the omega had after learning they had a child together had to be upsetting to say the least. The fact that Ms. Lounds had taken his anonymity away was a violation that she would need to be punished for when he had the chance.

“Of course.”

Her relief made him focus back on the picture again.

“His name is Will Graham,” she said, “He was a teacher until he had an...incident...and was put on permanent disability. I was able to confirm from an employee that he is the one who got your sample. They told him just days ago.”

“He is...unmated?”

“Yes,” she said, “What...are you thinking? You’re not as excited as I expected.”

Hannibal looked away from Will’s picture again.

“I am, of course, quite excited to know I’m going to be a father.”

Ms. Lounds frowned. “You don’t seem very excited.”

“Did you want me to break things and curse the sky for having me locked away while someone carries what may be the only child I will ever sire? Or did you want a video of me attempting a prison break? What reaction would satisfy you, Ms. Lounds?”

She pulled the picture away, seeming stoic, and glared at him. “I did you a favor here, Dr. Lecter. This story goes live in forty five minutes but I made sure to get here ahead of it so you would know.”

“Thank you for your courtesy, Ms. Lounds,” he said, “But I find myself not wishing to speak with you any longer. You can go.”

Her indignant growl made him feel that much better, and as he turned to go he wondered just how soon she’d realize the mistake she’d made.

He hoped it wasn’t very soon.

It was always more fun to surprise them.

“Here,” she said, making him turn just in time to watch the picture of Will Graham come through the box that brought in his meals and books, “You might want to pretend you’re ‘above’ it but I think you want this.”

Hannibal waited until she was gone to retrieve the fallen picture, and when he saw Will Graham’s face again he felt an overwhelming connection between them.

He ran his fingers over the picture and smiled. “Hello, Will.”

Chapter 3

Will was woken up by the sound of a helicopter flying over his house. He groaned, rolled over to grab his phone, and frowned at the display screen.

You have 157 new notifications.

He unlocked the screen and saw most were from Dr. Bloom and Cryos.

“Will, this is Alana Bloom. Please call me. It’s important.”

Will listened to three more, his anxiety rising, and went to open the curtain for some sun.

The swarm of reporters that ran at his window made him rear back, shocked, and he closed the curtain again just as he dialed Dr. Bloom.

“Will, thank god. I’ve been so worried.”

Will felt his distress rise and put a hand on his belly.

“He’s broken out, hasn’t he?”

“What? No! No, Hannibal Lecter is still right where he belongs.”

“How did they get my name? Who...?”

She sighed. “Freddie Lounds. She was stalking the parking lot waiting to see an omega in distress and got your information.”

“Any omega could be in distress after going to Cryos. How does that prove...?”

“An employee confirmed the news. They’re working on figuring out just who that might have been. Will, I’m so sorry.”

Will took a deep breath that he let out as he sat on the bed again.

“I can say it was a lie.”

“She posted the paperwork that pretty much confirmed it. You can say it’s fake, but...”

Will felt tears fill his eyes as he picked up his tablet and opened TattleCrime. The headline was the first thing he saw.

HANNIBAL LECTER IS GONNA BE A DADDY

His anger rose as he clicked the link, but was soon followed by fear as he read what was inside.

LECTER: I am quite excited to know I'm going to be a father.

"She told him? You couldn't have opened with that?"

"Will..."

He hung up on her and found Georgia's office number. She answered on the first ring.

"Will, I—"

"No, let me talk first. I'm suing you and that place for all its worth. How could a company that pretends to pride on caring about the clientele so much be so fucking careless?! How---"

"The employee in question will be fired. Cryos does not cond--"

"Do NOT pretend that this whole situation hasn't been fucked up FROM the beginning. You took in that monster of an alpha's seed because he looked great on paper and now the publicity will be good for you while I'm being stalked by reporters and waxed poetic by a cannibalistic alpha who thinks my kid is his. DO NOT PRETEND THIS IS ABOUT CRYOS."

There was silence on the other end.

"I apologize. Will..."

"Give me that name, Georgia. Who was it?"

"I can't do that."

"Yes, you can. You know how fucked up this all is, and I deserve to know."

"Will, it's against the law to even tell you who---"

"You better tell every person in that building to sleep with one eye open from now on. Cuz if my baby's father DOES get out of prison and kidnap me? I'm gonna send him your way."

He hung up the phone with tears streaming down his face.

"*Fuck.*"

His daughter kicked him and he rubbed at his belly trying to smile. "It's gonna be okay, honey. I promise."

Will went into the bathroom and splashed cold water on his face before he took a piss. The relief did nothing for the worry that continued to plague him. He refused to think of his baby as a mistake.

Nothing about her was wrong, no matter who her alpha was.

He washed his hands and stared at himself in a mirror for what felt like an eternity.

He could do this.

Will took a deep breath before he left the bathroom and walked to the door, letting it out just before he opened himself up to chaos.

Swarms of reporters all came at him and the dogs began to bark. Will pulled the door closed and cared very little about how he looked.

“Mr. Graham! Has Hannibal Lecter contacted you?”

“Will! Will look over here!”

“Are you worried for your life, Will?”

“Do you plan on keeping the baby now that you know it might be a monster?”

He glared at the last reporter. “What’s your name?”

The man blinked, confused. “I...my name is Dallas Smith, I work for the Gazette.”

“Do you think it’s wise to piss off a guy who’s carrying the baby of a serial killer? What do you think might happen if he gets out? You think he’ll be happy to know you upset me?”

Dallas turned white. “Are you threatening me?”

Will smiled. “Just asking questions, Mr. Smith.”

He watched as the obvious omega turned tail and took off without answering, then looked at all the others. “Any more questions?”

The silence was deafening.

“None at all?”

“Mr. Graham?”

Will looked at the dark haired female beta to his left. “Yes? Your name?”

“I prefer not to give it,” she said, “I was going to ask....are you worried that Hannibal Lecter might break out of prison to see his baby?”

He shook his head. “I have every faith that he’s securely locked up in the Baltimore State Hospital for the Criminally Insane. I’m sure they’ve got him very well monitored and despite how ‘happy’ he is to be a father he’s never going to be one to my daughter.”

Several more cameras went off and Will stood still, refusing to let the worry fill him or show in his face.

“Mr. Graham!”

“Yes?”

“Do you have any names picked out?”

Will blinked. “I...was thinking of calling her Abigail.”

A few more hands went up and Will shook his head.

“That’s all for today. Please leave.”

He turned and went back inside with his heart pounding.

Where had that come from?

There had been no names that caught his attention and yet that one suddenly came to him.

He rubbed his belly and stared down with a smile.

“You like that name, honey? Abigail? Sounds good, right?”

The baby kicked him in response and he laughed with tears in his eyes again.

“Hello, Abigail.”

Chapter 4

“I specifically stated I did not wish to see you again, Ms. Lounds.”

Ms. Freddie Lounds stood close enough that Hannibal could see her clearly wearing a dark wig, plain suit, and glasses that should have fooled no one. He knew her quite well already by scent, and hated the very idea that she thought she deserved his attention once more after the last time.

She smiled at him and took off the glasses, putting them into her front pocket.

“I’ve been told you have a keen sense of smell, Dr. Lecter, but I wasn’t aware just *how* keen.”

“I’d like you to leave before I inform the guards.”

Freddie held up a small tablet. “Are you sure? I have a video you might wish to see. I’d like your reaction to what’s in it.”

Hannibal knew that something more than likely had to do with Will. He hated his new weakness but also craved seeing the father of his baby in action.

“Another invasion of privacy, Ms. Lounds?”

“Oh no,” she said, smiling, “This time I wasn’t the only one there, and he stepped into the light of his own accord. Interested, Doctor?”

He licked his lips. “You must know I am or you wouldn’t be dangling the unseen video in front of me.”

“Oh, I know,” she said, smirking as she touched the tablet, “But I’d like to hear you ask nicely after how rude you were to me last time.”

His anger grew the longer she stood there looking smug and seeming to think she was untouchable. “Please,” he said, careful to keep the anger out of his voice, “May I see?”

Ms. Lounds pressed play and put the tablet up to the glass separating them.

There was a mob of reporters swarming Will on his porch, and he was wearing what looked to be pajamas. His belly was in full view, and Hannibal’s baser instincts filled him with both want and anger over his omega in such peril.

But Will did not seem frightened as the questions were thrown, and it only took one to make him angry.

“Do you plan on keeping the baby now that you know it might be a monster?”

Hannibal watched Will glare out at the reporter who dared ask such a rude question. *“What’s your name?”*

Freddie had only caught the side of the man’s face but he seemed confused by the anger in Will’s eyes. *“I...my name is Dallas Smith, I work for the Gazette.”*

“Do you think it’s wise to piss off a guy who’s carrying the baby of a serial killer? What do you think might happen if he gets out? You think he’ll be happy to know you upset me?”

“Are you threatening me?”

Will smiled. *“Just asking questions, Mr. Smith.”*

Hannibal’s pride swelled as the reporter took off in a hurry and he was enthralled by the expert way his omega had defeated such a person so easily.

“Any more questions?”

The silence was deafening and Hannibal began to memorize every face he saw in that throng of reporters.

“None at all?”

“Mr. Graham?”

Will looked to his left. *“Yes? Your name?”*

“I prefer not to give it,” she said, and Hannibal recognized her voice immediately as Freddie herself, *“I was going to ask....are you worried that Hannibal Lecter might break out of prison to see his baby?”*

He watched Will shake his head and touch his belly almost in comfort of the very idea while making no expression of fear at all.

“I have every faith that he’s securely locked up in the Baltimore State Hospital for the Criminally Insane. I’m sure they’ve got him very well monitored, and despite how ‘happy’ he is to be a father he’s never going to be one to my daughter.”

The words should have stung, but all they did was make Hannibal’s heart beat faster.

Will Graham was everything Hannibal could have hoped for in an omega.

He had such darkness in him already that would not be hard to cultivate, and Hannibal longed to be the one to help nurture those feelings as they grew.

Freddie took the tablet away and held out her tape recorder. *“Your response, Doctor?”*

“Do you regularly go incognito to interview people whose lives you’ve ruined?”

She glared at him. "I didn't ruin anyone's life, Dr. Lecter. Will Graham is the one who came out voluntarily to..."

"Will Graham is stronger than any of the vultures who would take advantage of his situation for money, especially you Ms. Lounds. You have single handedly upended that man's life for your own gain."

"If I hadn't, you would never have known he existed."

Hannibal smiled. "Yes, and for that I will thank you but I wholeheartedly condemn the way you went about finding him. If you even think to step foot in this building again wanting to see me, I will alert the guards."

Freddie shook her head. "If you think acting chivalrous and stoic is going to impress an omega like *that*, Dr. Lecter, you don't know omegas very well. Will Graham is not a normal omega, and it's quite obvious why he chose to be a single father. He's unstable and unmateable. Sitting in your cell thinking you'd be able to woo him is sad, even for you."

His hands shook as he pressed them to the glass.

"Good day, Ms. Lounds. You had better hope we never see each other again."

She started to walk off but stopped at the doorway.

"The baby's name is Abigail," she said, turning to smile at him, "And you'll never get to see her face."

Freddie then took off without another word.

Abigail.

His daughter's name was Abigail.

He closed his eyes and began to replay the video in his mind.

Will was perfect.

He needed to see him.

Hannibal started pacing back and forth, eyes still closed, as plans began to form. Breaking out would be ideal, but perhaps it was too soon.

His resolve to go about this slowly was very quickly crumbling, and he suspected he would not be able to resist the lure of Will for long. Will seemed like he would be put off by interference from anyone, let alone a killer alpha stranger on the run, and he wondered just how to get close enough to touch without alienating him.

No one had tried to appeal to Will as an omega for what he suspected was a very long time.

The very idea made his body ache with possibility.

Will would be his, no matter how he had to go about making it so, and soon there would be no turning back.

Hannibal went to bed that night still restless and longing for Will beside him.

He, Will and Abigail were meant to be a family.

And no matter matter what it took to make that happen, they would be.

Chapter 5

The death threats started about a week after the article.

Will didn't think anyone was really going to kill him for carrying Hannibal Lecter's baby but he did file a police report every time a new one came just in case. They were mostly throw away emails and letters that seemed like they were written by a five year old but still better safe than sorry. He still could barely leave his house now and got groceries delivered, though even that was a hassle just opening the door.

Hannibal Lecter hadn't been interviewed again after that last one, and Will watched the throngs of reporters trickle down to about half after a few weeks. They'd be back when he gave birth in a few months, he knew that, but the story of the "killer baby" seemed to be dying down because he was so boring an incubator.

The dogs were by his side and growing more protective by the day, which helped chase off a few more reporters and lookie loos. They no longer camped out at his place all night, often not even coming till mid afternoon, and he was able to even walk on his front porch to get the paper without being almost knocked on his ass.

Will was just starting to feel like he could breathe again.

Which was why when he heard the glass break at just after three a.m. that night he was so scared he could hardly move. He felt Abby kick him and he winced, pulling back the comforter, and the dogs made no noise which was weird.

He put one foot on the floor just as the shadowy figure stood just steps away from him.

The dogs all remained asleep, not moving, and Will was terrified.

Will reached over for the lamp by his bed but the figure was faster, rushing forward and knocking him onto his side. He cried out, growling as the man in the mask pinned his arms down and loomed over him. The surprise at smelling an omega was immediate, and he kicked out rushing toward the door only to be knocked down again.

Why weren't the dogs waking up?

Tears filled his eyes as Will pushed back, trying to get them off, and he groaned as they rolled him over attempting to tie his wrists.

"I'll kill you," he hissed, "I'll---"

He kicked out again and the omega fell back just as Will rushed out the back door.

He nearly fell down the stairs outside and raced toward the biggest rock he could find. The omega stood panting on the bottom step.

“WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS? DID HE SEND YOU? DID HE?”

The omega made no sound, and rushed toward Will again.

He hit the omega across the face with the rock, knocking them down, and hit them over and over again until they didn't move.

Will reached out to feel a pulse and found nothing, sobbing with relief. He forced himself to get up and head back toward the house where he picked up his phone.

“911, what's your emergency?”

He could hardly breathe as he spoke. “Someone....they broke into my house...I killed them. I'm seven months pregnant and I think I've been hurt. Please send someone. I...please.”

“Stay on the line, sir,” the woman said, “And tell me your location.”

Will could hardly get out his address just before he fainted.

He woke up in the hospital and was relieved to see Dr. Bloom at his side.

“Dr. Bloom...”

She smiled. “Hello, Will. How are you feeling?”

Will sobbed. “I...is she...?”

“Your daughter is fine,” she said, taking his hand, “You're fine. You...you saved the both of you.”

He could hardly see through his tears.

“I...”

“Shh...just rest. Everything is fine, Will. Just fine. When you're ready there's a detective outside who wishes to speak with you.”

Will nodded and put hands on his belly. “You can let them in.”

“You're sure?”

“Yeah.”

Dr. Bloom opened the door and a familiar face walked inside. Will had seen Jack Crawford's picture when he searched Hannibal Lecter online more than once.

“You're not a policeman.”

Jack Crawford smiled. “No, I'm not. But anything at all involved with Hannibal Lecter is designated FBI. Though I'm happy to tell you the man who you killed was not involved with Hannibal Lecter, or at least not in the way you probably assumed.”

Will frowned. "What does that mean?"

Jack flipped open a notebook. "Matthew Brown, age thirty three, is a Lecter fanboy who apparently was going to take it upon himself to...procure...your baby and raise her as his own. He fancied himself in love with Hannibal Lecter and hoped to spend a life with him."

Will felt sick. "Christ, there are people like that?"

"You'd be surprised, Mr. Graham."

He stared at his hands, and saw the bruises on his wrists. "Are there more of them?"

"Plenty more," Jack said, sighing, "Which is why we think it's in your best interests to be put into protection for the remainder of your pregnancy. You would be taken to a location where no one---"

Will shook his head. "No, I'm not doing that. These bastards are not gonna force me out of my house. I'm staying there, and that's the end of it. You wanna put protection on me and guard the house, that's fine."

"Will..."

"Jack," Will said, "I'm staying home."

The alpha sighed. "You're making a mistake."

"I've protected myself from one asshole and I can do the same again if I have to."

Jack looked at Dr. Bloom. "You're just gonna let him sit here and say this? Isn't it...I dunno... bad for the baby?"

Dr. Bloom frowned. "Will...you're nearing at risk age already for this pregnancy. Maybe it's best..."

Will shook his head. "I'm not leaving."

The silence he got in return was filled with tension but neither alpha said anything.

"Fine," Jack said, "But I'm gonna have eyes all over that house until this is through."

"That's fine."

"It's a big mistake, Will. But I can't force you into anything so this'll have to do."

Jack turned to leave.

"Wait."

"What is it?"

"My dogs...are they..."

“It seems Brown put something into the food. You shouldn’t feed your dogs outside.”

Will felt a tinge of annoyance. “I take care of my dogs better than most, Director Crawford.”

“And yet he still was able to slip them a mickey. I’m shocked you didn’t notice.”

He blushed. “I...I’ve had things on my mind.”

“Hmm.”

“Well, if that’s all...I’ll be in touch. It seems we’re going to be seeing much more of each other the next few months.”

“Hopefully nothing else happens.”

“We’ll see. Have a good day, Will.”

Will watched him leave and waited until the door closed to look at Alana.

“Do you think I’m doing the wrong thing not leaving the house?”

She sighed. “I can’t tell you or any other omega what to do with their lives, Will. But I think...for both your sakes that if this happens again...you need to seriously think about going somewhere safe.”

He looked down at his belly. “I just...I feel like I need to be there. I...I just...”

“Just rest for now,” Dr. Bloom said, patting his arm, “That’s all you can do.”

Will nodded and turned onto his side, closing his eyes.

“Thank you, Dr. Bloom.”

“You’re welcome.”

He ran his hands over his belly and sighed just as he heard the door close again.

“We’re gonna be okay, Abby,” he whispered, a tear falling down his face, “We’re gonna be okay.”

Chapter 6

Frederick Chilton rarely visited Hannibal's cell without reason, which was why that morning Hannibal knew there had to be a good one. He sat at his desk in mid-draw of Will Graham, and only gave him a cursory glance.

"Good morning, Frederick."

Dr. Chilton was, as always, dressed in finery that was in obvious imitation of the ones he himself had worn in the past. He walked with a cane as he entered the room and his smug smile solidified Hannibal's suspicions.

"Good morning, Hannibal. How are we today?"

He set down his pencil. "Perfectly fine, as always."

Frederick looked around behind him. "I see you've drawn more pictures of Mr. Graham. The guards say that's pretty much *all* you draw now."

"He's... *inspired* me."

"I see," he drawled, pacing a bit, "It's with great regret I have come to inform you of an... *incident*... that took place many days past."

Hannibal froze. "An incident?"

"Mmm hmm," Frederick drawled, stopping to offer a frown that didn't quite reach his eyes, "Will Graham was *attacked* late in his home four nights ago by a particularly enthusiastic fan of yours who wanted to steal his baby. This crazed fan even took it upon himself to drug Will Graham's seven dogs before attacking the poor thing. Will was knocked down several times in an attempt by this other omega to subdue him but in the end poor Will was able to....do away with....the male omega in question."

Hannibal's heart began to beat faster. "He killed him?"

"Yes," he sighed, "And quite brutally I'm told. I just...thought you'd like to know."

His hand shook as he picked up the pencil again. "Thank you, Dr. Chilton, for informing me."

Frederick frowned. "That's it? Just thank you? You're not gonna ask if he or the baby is okay?"

"I assume you would inform me if they were not as this whole display of information seems to be an attempt to get me to show some type of emotional outburst. You and Ms. Lounds both are quite similar in your desperate hope that I'll have an episode that can be caught on tape."

He blushed, stammering, "I certainly have no---"

"Good day, Frederick," Hannibal purred, beginning to draw again, "Thank you for coming to visit."

The indignant huff he got in response made his smile widen and he waited until he was alone again to process the information.

Will had killed someone in defense of himself and their child.

Hannibal shivered.

He was just as Hannibal imagined him to be. The perfect, vicious, dark omega of his very dreams. Hannibal licked his lips and began to think hard about what came next.

There was, of course, the possibility that Will had been taken into some sort of protective custody in order to keep him safe, but Hannibal assumed this would not be the case. Will was at his core an independent and singular omega. He had yet to form a need for companionship beyond apparently many dogs. Will seemed attached to his home to leave without the added needs of pregnancy and his pregnancy hormones would make him unable at this time he was sure.

Hannibal regretted that in order to make their family come together he'd have to take that away from him.

He sighed as he finished the drawing in front of him of Will's angry glare, and the piece seemed unfinished. A moment later he picked up a red pencil and added in specks of blood all over Will's beautiful face.

"Soon, Will," Hannibal smiled, running his fingers over the drawing, "Very soon."

Chapter 7

The day started off so well.

His new dog Winston spent his first night without a cage or an accident, the police protection helped Will get past the swarm of reporters on his front lawn, and he had a doctor's appointment at eleven that went so well he left with an ultrasound photo and a smile.

And by twelve o'clock that night he'd gone almost the whole day without throwing up.

Things were looking up again despite the renewed interest in him since the Matthew Brown incident now nearly a week later.

Will was glad he'd said yes to the police presence. His distress at returning to the house that first night quickly disappeared knowing there were men outside ready to defend him if another fan of Hannibal's decided to follow in Brown's footsteps.

He'd just finished watching one of his favorite shows that the dogs also seemed to enjoy, Dog Nation, and was ready to settle in for the night. The minute he turned off the light all of the worries that still lingered seemed to fade away.

Then, just as he began to drift, someone knocked at his door.

Will blinked in the darkness and stared at his alarm clock.

It was eleven ten p.m.

He sighed, getting to his feet, and headed for the door.

The officers outside occasionally needed to come in to take a leak, and he was sure that this must be one of those times. He didn't even bother to take a look as he opened the door.

Will froze when he saw who was on the other side.

"Hello, Will."

He found himself unable to speak.

"Don't be frightened."

Hannibal Lecter stood on his back porch with blood on his cheek wearing what looked to be a guard uniform. Will let out a long breath. "I..."

He knew if he whistled the dogs would come running and did just that.

"Clever boy," he purred, gently leading Will backward into the house without even touching him, "There's no need. They won't attack me."

Hannibal kicked the door closed and the noise brought Winston and Buster toward them. A tear fell down Will's cheek as both dogs stopped to observe them but made no move to attack.

He stepped closer again and Will backed away. "Why?"

"You see...when an omega is carrying their scent mingles with that of the alpha who sired their child...the dogs have been slowly becoming attuned to my scent for many months now."

Will cursed. "I'll scream."

“The police outside will not hear you as they are otherwise....detained.”

“You killed them.”

“I’ve subdued them. I thought perhaps you’d frown upon murder, though I regret what I may have to do in order to get your compliance.”

He looked to his left and knew if he was fast enough he could head for the kitchen to grab a knife.

“What do you want?”

Hannibal stepped forward again, and his scent was overpowering. Will hated how his body betrayed him the closer they got to each other. “You.”

“I’m not....”

“If you do not come willingly I will have to take you by force, and in doing so your canine companions will see me as a threat despite their liking my scent. I may have to...protect myself from them.”

Will’s distress rose as he looked at the dogs. “No, please, just...”

“I am sorry that they may need to die in order to achieve my goal, but none of that will have to happen if you come willingly. We are currently running out of time before the protection needs to call in outside, and additional police will already be on their way when they learn about my escape. I’ve cut this too close to stop now, Will. Are you going to come willingly?”

He felt a tear fall down his face. “ *Yes* .”

Hannibal smiled and held out his hand. “Show me.”

He stepped forward, shaking, and took Hannibal Lecter’s hand.

The touch of his skin made Will’s whole body throb in response.

“Damnit,” he hissed.

Hannibal gently pulled him in close and pressed his nose to Will’s neck. He bit his lip to keep from moaning as he scented him.

“Perfect,” he whispered, “Just perfect.”

“I...”

“An omega is specifically attuned to the scent of their alpha.”

“That’s not...true.”

“It is if they are...true mates,” Hannibal sighed.

True mates.

“Fuck.”

“Come, Will. We have a long ride ahead of us.”

Will looked back at the dogs one more time before he let Hannibal lead him out of the house.

He stopped outside when he saw the slumped over bodies of the officers who had protected him this past week.

“They’ll wake soon enough, I promise you.”

“I hate you,” Will hissed, digging his nails into Hannibal’s palm, “True mates or not I don’t think I’ve ever hated anyone more.”

Hannibal smiled. “Of course you do.”

He stepped down the steps and headed toward what looked like an obvious kidnapping van, white with no signs of a make or model. Hannibal stopped just before they got to the door and pulled something out his pocket.

“For safety.”

Will had no time to pull away before he handcuffed them together.

“How are you going to drive like this?”

Hannibal smiled, opening the car door, “Don’t worry, Will. I’m a very safe driver.”

He stepped into the car and Will followed, taking Hannibal’s hand as he stepped up into the van. The minute they both sat down he hit the lock and Will hated how his distress never came.

His body was betraying him.

Hannibal started the van and pulled away from the curb.

“Your anger is justified,” he purred, “Omegan biology makes it difficult for them to break from any alpha they’re attached to, be it by pregnancy or bonding. It can---”

“Stop,” Will whispered, “Just stop. You don’t give a shit about me or my biology.”

“On the contrary, Will....I care very much.”

Will said nothing as they drove, and soon he found it hard to keep his eyes open. He hated the close confinement, and how strong Hannibal’s alphan scent seemed to overpower everything else.

“Sleep, Will. I promise nothing will happen to you.”

He shook his head. “I can’t...I...”

“Shh...everything is going to be fine.”

Will couldn’t help but close his eyes, and a tear fell down his cheek as sleep overtook him.

This just the beginning of his nightmare.

He was sure what happened next would be much worse.

Chapter 8

Hannibal smiled when he heard Will yelling below deck.

He was awake.

His omega had slept nearly twelve hours since he'd taken him, and not once had Will seemed distressed. This boded well for his theory on them being true mates, which made his whole body warm at the possibility, and their daughter would be born with advantages because of this.

Children of true mates were known to be smarter, well adjusted, and stronger than those born of regular bonds. The rarity made them even more extraordinary themselves.

He was so happy that fate had brought them together.

Will yelled again and Hannibal turned off the boat to drop anchor before heading down to him.

Hannibal found Will wide awake in the bed they'd shared all night.

"Good morning, Will."

"I have to pee," Will hissed, eyes wild, "Where are we?"

Hannibal undid the handcuff that attached him to the bed and Will didn't move.

"Come see."

He then left him alone again and went up on deck.

The boat had been a last minute idea, spur of the moment, though he had briefly owned a small one of his own he'd grown bored very quickly traveling alone and sold it within a year. He'd been driving the stolen van just by the marina hoping to get as far away as possible before they'd have to find shelter.

Murdering the nearest occupants of a remote cabin had always been his plan, but the boat felt even better, and as he killed the owners of The Thrill he knew this was right. Will would not be able to run as fast away and there was food enough to last them a week at best.

Just enough time to get into international waters and call upon Chiyoh.

Hannibal stared out at the water and felt calm for the first time since this all began.

"Oh."

Will stood at the top step and looked around them. His distressed scent was more developed now since they were so far apart but Hannibal knew if he got near him that would change. He

also was sure if he tried Will's hatred would only grow.

"Isn't it beautiful?" Hannibal said, staring out at the water again.

"Is this where you're gonna throw my body?"

He was startled out of his calm. "What do you mean?"

Will shivered, still not looking at him. "We're out in the middle of nowhere on a boat I'm sure was stolen. You kidnapped me and brought me out here for..."

"...protection. If we'd continued in the car we would easily be found. The boat will eventually be traced back to us but for now, we're quite free."

"One of us is," Will said, his voice bitter, "I don't know what kind of game you think you're playing but---"

Hannibal walked over to him and Will stepped back, but there was only so far he could without going over into the water.

"This is no game, Will, I assure you. I've come to bring our family together."

Will laughed, shaking his head as tears filled his eyes. " *OUR* family? I have a family, and you're not---"

Hannibal stepped closer and he saw Will's full body shudder. "Aren't I?"

"My body might be happy to welcome you, *Doctor* ," Will hissed, "But I'm not. You're a monster."

He reached out and touched Will's cheek. "Perhaps, but...I still don't plan on letting you go. Not when I've just finally found you."

Will glared at him, beautiful in his defiance, and Hannibal longed for the day when he'd look back at him with love. "I'll kill you," Will whispered, "If I have to."

He smiled. "I know."

Hannibal let him go, stepping back, and walked over to raise the anchor. Will made no noise and didn't seem to move at all behind him as he tossed the anchor onto the deck. He looked at Will again and found him sitting on the edge still staring out at the water.

He started the boat back up and began to move again.

The rest of the morning he stared at Will, mesmerized by the sight, and by mid afternoon they dropped anchor again.

"You keep stopping this boat and you'll get nowhere by nightfall."

"It's time for lunch," he said, "Come."

Will glared at him. “No, I’m not eating anything you give me.”

“You’re planning on starving our daughter? Is that the type of father you wish to be?”

His hatred only seemed to grow as they stared at each other, and it made Hannibal want him more. He’d never wanted an obedient, mate hungry omega like those who salivated after him for so long in his social circles. This was the omega he wanted. A fierce, clever, beautiful, dark being who fought against his biology while still yearning for connection to someone who would honor him.

Hannibal found himself aching to be that someone.

“Fine,” Will sighed, standing, “But no meat that isn’t in a package.”

“Of course.”

He made Will go down the stairs first, and they headed for the kitchen. The small area down below again made it difficult for Will not to be affected by his scent and Hannibal enjoyed watching him fight his inner omega while inspecting the steaks he found in the small refrigerator.

“Good?”

“Fine.”

Their closeness only made Will’s pupils dilate, and Hannibal knew if he wanted he could easily coax him quickly into sexual intercourse. Will had not been with an alpha, or anyone he suspected, for a very long time. He smelled untouched but not virginal.

“I will have lunch finished shortly, please sit.”

Will stepped back, confused, and Hannibal turned his back to him as he began to prepare.

Seconds later he narrowly missed the knife that Will tried to stab into his side, grabbing hold of Will’s arm and maneuvering them both against the counter. Will’s eyes were wild, desperate, and Hannibal ripped the blade from his hand letting it fall to the floor.

“Clever boy.”

“Fuck you,” Will growled, trying to get out of his arms.

Hannibal leaned in to scent his neck and he moaned.

“I would not be averse to you inside me, Will,” he purred, nuzzling his neck, “Not at all.”

He felt Will’s whole body react and turned him around quickly, pressing his cock to Will’s eager hole through his pajama pants. They were so thin he could feel the wetness already forming.

“You would enjoy that as well, I’m sure.”

“Fuck...”

“I regret that I will have to cuff you again to the bed, Will. I was enjoying having you close, but it seems...that is not safe for either of us.”

“I’ll kill you,” Will sighed, panting as Hannibal thrust his hardness against Will’s backside, “I...fuck...”

“I won’t force myself upon you,” he whispered, “Not in this state. When we finally do come together...you will be the one begging for my knot.”

Will laughed. “I’ll kill you first,” he sighed, “I’ll...”

“We’ll see.”

Hannibal turned them both and led Will back into the bedroom where he handcuffed him again to the headboard. Will’s face was flushed red and he smelled so eager but Hannibal left him without a word.

He closed and leaned against the door to palm himself through the guard’s uniform he’d stolen just hours ago. They were already so compatible that the longer it took for them to come together the more satisfying the event would be.

He could hardly wait.

But for now, it was time for lunch.

Chapter 9

Time seemed to have no meaning on the boat.

Will wasn't sure if it had been hours or days since he'd been taken, and yet he'd never felt better in all his life. Hannibal's presence was a horrible comfort to him, so much so that he slept with no nightmares and had dreams filled with sex so good he woke up wetter than he'd ever been before.

It was a curse being born an omega.

He couldn't wait to get off this boat and have some distance between them, though after his stunt at lunch Hannibal wasn't eager to let him roam free on the boat like he'd done before. Will was kept mostly cuffed to the bed except for when he had to relieve himself or shower. That was the only time he was able to be completely alone and cut off from Hannibal's cloying scent that muddled his senses.

Will found himself still eerily calm about this whole thing and he knew it was because of what Hannibal had called them.

True mates.

The once in a lifetime event that every person in the world dreamed of finding and his was a serial killer who decided kidnapping him was a good start in the courting process. It was just his shit luck that he'd found himself carrying his serial killer true mate's baby and was now bound to him against his will.

Still he found himself doing something stupid.

Talking.

They talked more than anything else. Long, oddly intimate talks in the small bedroom where Will revealed things he shouldn't have and Hannibal answered every question he asked, even the spiteful ones.

"You didn't kill the cops the night you took me," he asked, taking a bite of a tuna sandwich Hannibal made because Will insisted on using the canned goods, "Did you kill anyone before you got to me?"

"Yes."

"Who?"

"Three guards at the hospital who came in to check on me," Hannibal said softly, biting into his own sandwich, "And an acquaintance of yours."

Will froze. "Who?"

"Dallas Smith."

He felt oddly happy to hear that. "Oh?"

"He was parked on the street outside watching your house. I came upon him quite by accident and watched him die before coming to see you."

Will resisted the urge to smile. "I'm shocked he was there at all."

"Some reporters will do anything to get the...scoop," Hannibal said, smiling, "Even risk their own lives."

"I guess," Will mumbled, feeling still oddly happy that one of the reporters that hounded him got their comeuppance, "Too bad it wasn't Freddie."

Hannibal's smile widened. "Ms. Lounds will get hers eventually," he said, eyes never leaving Will's, "Reporters like her are often even more reckless than poor Mr. Smith. I suspect she will find her way in our path again."

Will swallowed past the words he wanted to ask and just kept on eating. He shouldn't be even asking things about murder, or be interested in it. The whole reason he'd left his old job was to get away from thoughts like this.

He sighed, licking lips as he took the last bite of his sandwich.

Hannibal watched him wordlessly, his gaze as always laser focused on Will, and the blush that came to his cheeks was annoying.

"Stop it."

"Stop what?"

He glared at him.

"Staring at me."

"You're a very handsome man, Will. I will not be sorry for appreciating that."

Will hated the little flutter those words caused in his belly, and reminded himself of the reason they were here in the first place.

You didn't kidnap me because I'm handsome."

“Not entirely,” Hannibal purred, sitting forward a bit across the room, “You are carrying my child and the things you did after learning that endeared you to me. I found myself desperately wanting to be near you, to just *see* you, and could not hold back my need any longer.”

He felt Abigail kick at his belly and tears filled his eyes.

“Is that why you threatened my dogs?”

Hannibal sighed. “I regret---”

“Don’t *lie* to me, Dr. Lecter. You knew what you were doing.”

He watched Hannibal nod. “Yes, I did.”

“Would you have hurt them?”

“If I had to.”

Will looked away. “Killed them?”

“Will...”

“Answer me.”

“No,” he said, making Will turn to look at him again, “I would not take your family from you entirely. I...I don’t want to hurt you, Will.”

Will laughed. “Yeah, right.”

Hannibal sighed. “We were having such a nice time,” he whispered, “I’m sorry that’s now ended.”

“I blame my omega hormones.”

“If that helps you, then blame away,” Hannibal said, walking over to take Will’s empty plate, “But we both know that’s not entirely the reason.”

Will pulled on his handcuff. “If you’ve forgotten, *Alpha* , I’m not here because I want to be.”

“I know.”

He watched Hannibal walk to the door.

“I’ll have to go to the bathroom again soon.”

“I’m aware,” Hannibal said softly, turning, “Though I suppose I should tell you that in a matter of hours we will be in the air and on the way to our final destination.”

Will blinked. “Where? How? Who...?”

“That I cannot tell you.”

He pulled on his handcuff and glared at him. “You’re just fine with spending your whole life trying to court someone who may never let you bond with them?”

Hannibal smiled. “Yes.”

Will looked away from him. “I could end up killing you.”

“I’ll take that chance.”

Will said nothing, and Hannibal left him alone again. He laid his head down and tears filled his eyes.

Wherever they went next he knew he’d have to make his move.

If not for him, then for Abigail.

There was no way he could bond to Hannibal.

He didn’t want to be connected anymore to this monster than he already was and after only a few days together it was getting harder not to give in.

Will put his hands on his belly. “It’ll be okay, Abby,” he whispered, shaking, “It’ll be okay.”

Chapter 10

La Villa Perduto was the perfect place to raise a family.

Hannibal had acquired several different homes all over the world in case he needed to escape somewhere safe if he was found out under many different aliases, but this Italian estate was his favorite.

The property lay below Mt. Montaione, secluded enough that they had complete privacy. There were seven bedrooms, six bathrooms, a pool, and large sprawling yards all surrounded by a gated entrance. No one would bother them, no one one would hear if Will attempted to cry out for help, and if he tried to escape it would be hours before he'd find someone to help him.

And yet Hannibal found himself unable to risk the possibility.

Which was why Will was currently shackled in the largest bedroom of the house.

The easy camaraderie they'd shared on the boat seemed now gone entirely, and when he woke in their new location Will seemed even more ornery and defiant again. Hannibal refused to let himself get discouraged at the change.

Will would take some time to adjust to this new life, he knew, and it was misguided of him to think their bond would come so easily.

Omegean biology was inherently linked to hormones, yes, but they still had minds of their own. There were plenty of them who would get into a mating stance the minute they met their true mates, yes, but not all. Will had a strong mind of his own, and would not be tamed so easily. Hannibal had no need for a docile omega. He looked forward to wooing Will's favor.

Chiyoh did not share his optimism.

“He will not bend so easily.”

She had stayed behind the evening when they made dock, and helped maneuver Will into the house. Two alphas were a bit hard for any omega to fight and Hannibal was pleased that Will still tried.

“I know.”

Her raised eyebrow made him grin. “He smells like you.”

“Yes.”

“He’s carrying your child.”

Hannibal nodded, handing her over the eggs he’d cooked just an hour ago. Will had ignored his offer of breakfast and spoken not at all to him since they’d gotten on the small plane Chiyoh had arranged for them.

“Yes, it was a...fortuitous event...that I was not made aware of until recently.”

She sipped her coffee, eyes on him, and set the mug down softly. “I know.”

“I’m surprised you came to my aid.”

“Why would I not?”

“You have been known to be....protective...of omegas in the past.”

“So have you.”

“True.”

Chiyoh took another bite of her food, not looking at him again. “He will be a challenge,” she said, taking another bite, “But I know you enjoy such things.”

“Yes, I do.”

Her gaze fell on him again. “I hope that the final...climax...of it all...ends as it should.”

Hannibal raised his mug. “As do I.”

They both ignored the yelling that came from the upstairs bedroom. He knew Will had already eaten, and the shackles were long enough he could move about the room. There was no need to assist him.

The two of them finished their breakfast in relative silence after that short conversation, and Chiyoh left without another word. He went up the stairs immediately following and opened the bedroom door to find Will lying on his back with tears in his eyes. His tray was upturned and it seemed he hadn't eaten a single thing.

“You need to eat.”

“I'm not eating anything you make me.”

“I will show you the packages, Will, if that will ease your worries. There was no human meat in your breakfast.”

Will glared at him. "I'm just supposed to believe you?"

"If you'd like to come watch me I can remake your meal."

He watched Will battle with hunger over stubbornness.

"Or you can let Abigail starve until I'm forced to feed you intravenously."

Will's fists tightened at his sides. "I'm not—"

"These final months are very important in an infant's development. Depriving both the baby and yourself will not help anyone. Also if you allow yourself to become weakened you'll be unable to kill me. I'm sure you don't want that."

He held back a smile when Will got up off the bed and walked up to him. "Fine," Will mumbled, holding up his handcuffs, "But how are you going to keep track of me downstairs?"

Hannibal reached into his back pocket and took out another pair of handcuffs with a longer chain between them. He affixed one end to his own wrist and held out the other to Will. Closer now he could smell Will's scent reacting to being near him and the minute Will secured the other end to his wrist Hannibal smiled.

"I appreciate your cooperation."

He reached under his shirt to pull the chain around his neck that contained the key off to take off the other set.

"This isn't me cooperating with you," Will said, his voice shaking, "It's me...saving myself and my child."

The other set of cuffs fell to the bedroom floor and Hannibal couldn't help but reach out to touch Will's hand. Will immediately attempted to pull away but he watched the shiver that went through his omega first.

"Of course, Will," he said, "And I appreciate that as well. You're already a very good father. Abigail is lucky to have you....and so am I."

Will blushed. "Compliments aren't gonna work either."

Hannibal nodded. "Of course not. But that will not stop me from giving them."

They walked out into the hall, and Hannibal watched Will take in the house as they descended the stairs. Hannibal could smell Will's distress dissipating, though that was not of his own accord he knew, and the moment they made their way into the kitchen he heard Will's stomach growl.

"You're hungrier than you think you are."

"I'm not a child, Dr. Lecter," Will snapped, eyes darting around possibly searching for a weapon, "I know I need food."

"Yes, but...you were still determined to starve as a punishment to me."

Hannibal reached out to hand Will an apple. He stared at the apple with trepidation but took the fruit still and bit into it with gusto. They went to the steel refrigerator where Hannibal handed Will packages of the ingredients he'd use for breakfast.

"How did you get food so fast?"

"Money helps get most things accomplished quickly."

“Even if you’re an escaped serial killer?”

Hannibal smiled as they went to the counter. “Even then.”

He was oddly fascinated when Will did not attempt to take a knife from the butcher block as preparation began for breakfast. Will seemed interested in what he was doing, eyes fixated, and when Hannibal turned to watch he was sitting on a stool behind him.

“There’s a knife sitting not inches from you.”

“I know.”

“And yet?”

“I’m more worried about whether the food you’re making is safe to eat. Like you said, I can’t kill you on an empty stomach.”

Hannibal smiled and went back to making a breakfast scramble. He missed the taste of human meat, and longed for the day when he could feed a real meal to his omega, but as he put the finished product on a plate it seemed adequate enough.

He turned in time to see Will holding the knife in his hand.

They stared at each other.

“You are no longer hungry?”

Will tightened his hold on the knife. “Where’s the key?”

“The key?”

“To these cuffs.”

Hannibal smiled and set the plate on the counter before he looked at Will again.

“Upstairs.”

“You...”

He leaned against the counter. “You’re not going to kill me, Will, so it would be best if you’d just put the knife down. Your breakfast will grow cold.”

Will shook his head. “I’m not gonna let you...just....I’m not.”

Hannibal took two steps forward and Will’s hand shook but didn’t move. He reached out to touch the hand holding the knife, and felt Will shiver.

“Will.”

Will weakly tried to move the knife forward but Hannibal caught the knife by the blade squeezing it in his palm. Drops of blood fell to the floor and tears fell down Will’s face.

“I hate you.”

He reached out to run his palm along Will’s cheek and was delighted when he leaned into the touch. “I know, Mylimasis,” he purred, “I know.”

Will let go of the knife and Hannibal put it on the counter behind him. His hand was still bleeding but he cared very little as he handed Will his breakfast along with a fork.

“Bon appetit.”

A moment later Will began to devour his meal, and Hannibal walked to the sink to clean his wound along with the knife. His heart felt very full as he could smell Will's distress waning again, and knowing that it was his meal that made him feel better.

The courting process had already begun.

Will just didn't realize it yet.

And if Hannibal's plans came to fruition?

He never would.

Chapter 11

Will knew eventually he'd have to start playing the game.

Days spent handcuffed to Hannibal were oddly comforting and only fueled his desire to run as they went by. He didn't try a knife again, it seemed redundant, and thought if he waited a few days Hannibal would be lulled into a false sense of security.

So Will just existed.

He ate all his meals, took showers, read books, and spoke only when spoken to.

Hannibal did not seem to like this, he could tell, but Will also knew that an alpha's prerogative was to protect their omega. Alphas wanted omegas to be happy.

Will was not happy.

Which was why a week into his imprisonment Will woke to a sound that filled him with dread.

A dog barking.

He lay in bed shaking, eyes shut, and knew that if he even seemed awake Hannibal would give him the dog. A dog he'd eventually use against Will.

Was he already that impatient?

Will felt tears in his eyes as he heard the bedroom door open.

“Will?”

He curled up, still shaking, and didn't open his eyes.

“Will, it's nearing afternoon. Your breakfast...”

Will opened his eyes to see Hannibal staring at him. “I'm not hungry.”

“Will, I thought we'd...”

“Take the dog back where you got it,” he said, his voice thick, “I'm not...I *won't* ...let you manipulate me like that again.”

Hannibal's face fell. “You heard.”

“You know I did.”

“Will...”

He sat up. “Take it back.”

“The puppy was meant as a gift.”

“A gift you'd gladly use to manipulate me into shit again,” Will snapped, almost growling, “Are you that impatient? Were you planning on holding a knife to its neck to get me in a mating position, Doctor?”

Hannibal stepped into the room and shut the door. “No.”

“Then...”

“You’ve been unhappy,” Hannibal said, frowning, “I thought you might like the company.”

Will felt an odd flutter in his belly and it wasn’t from Abigail kicking him. He blushed, turning away and laying down again. “I don’t need any company.”

The silence that followed was almost too silent. Will could smell Hannibal a bit too much, and he wondered if it was intentional or if the alpha was that upset that his gift had been unwanted.

He refused to accept the latter, so he clung to the former.

“I will have someone retrieve him in the morning,” Hannibal said, his voice flat, “And I will bring your breakfast to you.”

A moment later the sound of the door being opened and closed made Will’s chest hurt. He tried to go back to sleep but the sound of the dog barking again made his whole body respond.

He missed his dogs so much.

Who was taking care of them?

Tears fell down his face as he tried not to think about that, and when Hannibal returned he wiped the tears against the pillowcase.

“I will put breakfast on the dresser.”

Will sniffled. "Thank you."

"The dog---"

A sudden bark made them both look as a small dog came running into Will's bedroom. He sat up, ready to yell about Hannibal being an asshole, when the dog jumped on the bed. Will stared at the tiny white ball of fluff, aching to touch.

"I apologize," Hannibal said, moving to take the dog away, "She's been biting through most of the restraints and I can't seem to---"

Will reached out and ran his hand over the dog's head. She licked his fingers and he laughed.

"Puppies will do that."

"Yes, I suppose so," Hannibal whispered, "I confess I haven't had much experience."

Will picked up the dog and pulled her to his chest. She licked his face and he laughed again.

"Would you...still like me to take her?"

He looked up at Hannibal and shook his head. "She can stay a few days, maybe," he said, "I...I'm okay if she sticks around a bit longer."

Hannibal smiled. "Of course. Enjoy your breakfast."

He left them alone again and Will looked at the obviously expensive collar the dog wore.

“Aren’t you a spoiled little princess?”

The dog barked again and laid down beside him. He pet her softly.

God he missed his dogs.

He missed his house.

He missed his life.

Will got up from the bed and stood in front of his breakfast. Hannibal always made these elaborate meals every day and suddenly he wasn’t at all hungry. He took the toast and sat down on the bed again. The dog jumped up on him and he laughed, tossing her a piece of toast.

“Spoiled,” he mumbled, smiling.

She ran up and started biting his pillow. He clapped his hands. “No!”

The dog stopped, confused. “Bad girl,” he said, shaking his head, “NO.”

She went to grab his pillow again and he clapped his hands hard.

“NO!”

Will watched her stop, look at him again, and then decide to lay down. He smiled and pet her head. “Good, Princess. Good girl.”

The door suddenly opened and he looked up to see Hannibal. The alpha was smiling and Will immediately frowned.

“I heard you yelling.”

“She was being a brat,” he mumbled, “We’re fine.”

“Will...”

“I’m not hungry,” he said, not looking at him, “You can take the tray.”

“Will, I...I know I can’t make up for using the love you have for your dogs against you. I felt I had no other choice.”

Will didn’t look up. “We’re still not keeping her.”

“Of course.”

“I...”

“Your dogs are safely being taken care of by Dr. Bloom,” Hannibal said, “I...took the liberty of searching for their whereabouts.”

Will found it was hard to see through sudden tears. “I’m glad they’re okay.”

“Will...”

“Just go,” he said, “Take the tray.”

Hannibal came into the room and the dog growled at him. Will smiled. “Good girl.”

“She seems protective of you already.”

“I guess so.”

“Will you be having lunch in the bedroom as well?”

He wiped tears from his face. “Probably.”

“All I want is for you to be happy with me, Will. That has been my ultimate goal since this all began. I...I know we’re meant to be together. You are my mate.”

Will looked up at him again. “No, I’m not. You can’t just decide that for me. Your DNA being inside me doesn’t make me yours.”

Hannibal nodded. “Yes I know.”

“Then why...?”

He knelt down at Will’s bedside and the dog barked again but he ignored her.

“You are the only omega I will ever want,” he confessed, “The moment I saw you stand defiant in front of those reporters I...I wanted no one else.”

Will felt a flutter in his belly.

He could just start playing the game now, take advantage of Hannibal's weakness, and when the moment struck stick a knife in his neck. It would be so easy. Alphas wanted nothing more than to please their omegas.

Will picked the dog up and put her in his lap. She growled at Hannibal.

"That's where we differ, Dr. Lecter. The moment I saw you I knew there was no way I'd ever want you."

He felt oddly confused when Hannibal smiled. "I know," he said, moving to stand, "And that is why I will fight to gain your want. Enjoy your temporary companion, Will. I think Princess is a fine name. It suits her."

"I didn't name her! I---"

Will's anger rose when Hannibal didn't even bother to look at him again and he grew even more upset when he realized the stupid alpha hadn't even taken the food. He looked at the omelet, sausage, and juice.

His stomach growled.

"One bite won't hurt."

Minutes later the plate was empty, the dog pissed on the floor, and Will was asleep.

He didn't see Hannibal return to take the tray.

But he did see the tag Hannibal left on the dresser when he woke again.

PRINCESS.

Will felt Abigail kick him as he got up to pee, and Princess followed him like a good guard dog. He smiled at her sitting by the door.

“Princess.”

It suited her.

Chapter 12

The dog made Will feel more at ease, though the fight had not yet gone out of him.

Princess was fiercely protective of Will, and not quite a fan of Hannibal, which made Will like her even more. Hannibal tried valiantly to gain the canine's trust with treats but found that quite difficult.

"She dislikes me."

Will smiled and pet the dog's head as she sat in his lap at the table. Princess was a constant guest at all meals since her arrival and while Hannibal resented her getting between them he enjoyed seeing Will smile at her presence.

"I know," Will quipped, smiling as he fed her a piece of his steak, "That's why I like her so much."

Hannibal had hoped that by now nearly two weeks into knowing each other Will would have at least warmed to him some. His courting process had already begun with providing meals, giving gifts, and creating a home for them. Will's stubbornness made it quite difficult for his plan to move on from this stalemate and he feared that it would not even after Abigail was born.

The very idea made him feel ill, and he found himself unable to finish his meal.

"Not hungry?"

He looked up at Will. "No, I'm no longer hungry."

Will seemed oddly interested in this, and Hannibal resisted the urge to smile at his concern.

“Why?”

“You would not want to know the reason.”

Princess grabbed a bit of steak from Will’s plate and he didn’t scold her, instead running his hand over the poodle’s head. “I asked, didn’t I?”

“I...I find myself disappointed in our current relationship.”

Will suddenly started to laugh, shaking his head. “Relationship? Hannibal, you *kidnapped* me! We don’t have a relationship! You’re my captor, not my boyfriend.”

Hannibal frowned. “I am aware of this, Will. I just thought that perhaps living in close quarters and absorbing each other’s presence would make you think somewhat warmly to me after these past few weeks. I’ve cooked for you, taken care of your well-being, given you gifts, and you seem to still view me as the enemy.”

Will grinned. “You honestly think that giving me some soft clothes, a dog, fancy watches, and feeding me things I like is gonna make me fall in love with you? You kidnapped me, made me leave my *home* , and....you’re a *monster* , Dr. Lecter. I’d sooner fall in love with the dog.”

Hannibal frowned. “We are compatible, Will. You are my true mate. We are *meant* for each other. Biology is just as important as circumstance.”

Will blinked back sudden tears and set down his fork. “Why haven’t you just...?” he asked, not looking at Hannibal, “You could’ve...”

“I’m not a rapist, Will.”

“But you could’ve,” Will said again, a tear falling down his cheek, “You know you could’ve, even...sometimes at night, I...I miss your smell. I hate you for that.”

“Will...”

Will looked at him again. “Biology is not what makes someone fall in love with you, *Doctor*, and even if it is...I’m not like most omegas. I’m not so easily swayed.”

Hannibal felt the tightness in his chest loosen again as he smiled. “I know, Will. That’s why I came for you.”

Princess got up again and began to lick Will’s cheeks. He stared down at her, smiling, but didn’t stop crying.

“I don’t think I’m hungry anymore either.”

Hannibal sighed. “Will...”

“If you’re waiting for me to fall in love with you, Hannibal,” Will said, looking at him again, “You’re going to be waiting a very long time.”

“I’m aware of that,” Hannibal said, standing and taking their plates, “And yet still I believe.”

Will’s distress clogged his senses, and it took everything for Hannibal not to bridge the gap between them as he watched his omega head for the stairs to escape being near him again. The chains on his ankles dragged along the way and Hannibal longed for the day when he’d not hear them.

He realized that Will had made no move to stab him with the sharp knife he’d used to cut his steak, nor had he attempted murder in some time. Things were happening that Will himself did not even notice.

Hannibal sighed and began to clear away the dishes, only to hear a sharp cry that made him rush for the stairs.

Will was lying on the stairs, clutching his stomach, and the fear in his eyes made Hannibal want nothing more than to comfort him.

“Will, what’s...”

“I...I got this sharp pain and...it’s not a kick I know it’s not a kick. Something’s wrong.”

Princess barked and pulled at Hannibal’s pant leg, but he ignored her as he moved forward.

“May I?”

Will had tears in his eyes as he nodded, and Hannibal lifted Will up into his arms to carry him across the house to the couch. Will breathed in close his neck and he shivered at the obvious comfort gesture.

His omega needed him.

Hannibal set Will down gently, and Princess still seemed insistent to get him away pulling at his pants till they began to rip.

“PRINCESS STOP!”

The dog stopped immediately and stood at attention to her master.

“I’m impressed.”

“She’s a good girl,” Will said, sniffing, “It’s...God, what if...”

He stood staring down at Will with concern. “Please give me a moment.”

“You’re leaving?” Will said, whining, “I *finally* need you and you’re just gonna...”

Hannibal knelt down to take both Will’s hands in his. “I have medical supplies for this very thing, Will. Did you think I would not have prepared for emergencies?”

Will let out a shaky breath. “When did you even have the--”

He smiled. “Please, Will. Just...believe in my swift return.”

Will nodded once and he took off toward the pantry where he procured his medical bag only to find Will clutching Princess when he returned.

“Will...”

“I wanted to have a kid so bad, you know?” Will sniffled, a tear falling down his face, “If I...god if I lose her...I’m not even sure I can have another one. I’m---”

“Let’s not let ourselves drown in uncertainties. Tell me about this pain.”

Will lifted his shirt and Hannibal felt warm at the sight of his belly. He put a hand over the lower left area. “It was like a sharp pain but it lasted only a few seconds. It hurt though. Like I was...”

Hannibal took out a stethoscope and put it over Will’s belly. He moved it several more times until he finally found Abigail.

“...in labor?” he asked, opening his eyes.

Will blinked back tears. “Yeah, maybe? I don’t know.”

“Did your doctor ever explain Braxton Hicks contractions to you?”

He nodded. “I’ve had ‘em a few times but it’s never...”

“Omegas in...distress....can have a more severe form. I apologize if I’ve caused that for you,” he said, listening to his daughter’s heartbeat, “But Abigail’s heart is strong, and does not sound erratic or slowing down. I think if we sit for a bit and monitor your pain, Braxton Hicks will be the cause.”

Will let out a sob. “Oh god...shit...you’re sure?”

“Quite sure, yes,” he said, smiling, “Would you like to hear Abigail’s heart?”

“Please.”

Hannibal leaned forward and put the eartips into Will’s ears. The relieved smile that came over Will’s face made Hannibal’s heart squeeze tightly in his chest.

“She’s okay,” Will said, his voice thick, “She’s...”

He moved Will’s hand to the diaphragm and let go, moving to stand.

“Yes, I’ve...had some experience in omega births before. I know that some pregnant omegas can have a more difficult time than others. I...will let you have some space while I monitor things from across the room.”

Will grabbed his hand and Hannibal paused. “Don’t,” Will said, “I...please don’t. Just...stay close.”

Hannibal nodded, dumbfounded, and sat down beside Will. “Yes, of course.”

They were silent for a few minutes while Will listened to Abigail’s heart and Hannibal for the first time felt unsure of his place.

“You said...you worked with pregnant omegas?”

He nodded as Will squeezed his hand, and the sight of Will’s chains took all the joy out of this moment. “Yes, when I was in medical school I did my residence at a birthing center. I toyed with the idea of being an OBGYN for some time before settling on surgery.”

Will laughed. “You didn’t want to cut into omegas?”

“No, that wasn’t it,” Hannibal said softly, resting his hand on Will’s belly again, “I...lost a patient. I found it difficult to bounce back from her death and decided not to work in that field.”

“Oh,” Will said softly.

“Are you experiencing any more pain?”

“No,” Will whispered, letting go of his hand, “I...I think it’s okay.”

“That’s good,” Hannibal said softly, “May I?”

He handed the stethoscope back to Hannibal who could not resist listening to Abigail's heart again. The sound made him smile.

"She's very strong."

"Yeah," Will sighed, "I guess so."

Hannibal opened his eyes. "Just like her father."

They stared at each other in silence for what felt like forever until the spell broke and Will scooted away from him again.

"I have to be, don't I?" Will mumbled, "If I'm gonna survive this?"

"Will..."

"You can go across the room now," Will said, his voice thick again, "I'm fine."

Hannibal got up with reluctance and put the stethoscope around his neck. His body ached to be closer to Will now more than ever and yet he still did as Will requested. The armchair across the room was comfortable, and yet he felt as if he were sitting on a bed of knives.

Will had picked up the dog again and was lying with his head back against the couch cushions. His neck was fully exposed, and Hannibal's mouth watered at the sight.

"You are the most beautiful omega I've ever seen in my entire life."

Will's cheeks reddened and yet he did not open his eyes.

“It’s not gonna work,” he said, “I’m not...flattery doesn’t work on me.”

“I see,” Hannibal smiled, “Have you experienced much flattery in your life?”

“No,” Will said, turning away now, “But it still won’t work.”

“And yet,” Hannibal said, leaning back against the chair, “That will not stop me.”

The silence that followed didn’t seem to matter.

Will’s cheeks grew more reddened, and his pleased scent was overpowering.

Hannibal may not have won Will’s trust just yet, but he knew without a doubt that he’d win the war for his heart.

Chapter 13

Nights were the worst part of it now.

Will laid on his absurdly large bed in the dark, hardly able to sleep, and missed the scent of the alpha he hated more than any other.

The week following the scare Will had fought Hannibal at every opportunity, feeling ill at how stupid he'd been to seek comfort from the one person who would use his biology against him. He'd thought about playing the game not so long ago and now all he wanted to do was fight as long as he possibly could.

But in turn he'd deprived himself of something he hadn't known he needed.

Hannibal.

The closer he got to the end of his pregnancy the more he craved Hannibal's scent, touch, and even just the sound of his voice. Will had played with staying secluded in his room before now but this past week he hadn't even opened the door for meals when Hannibal came to bring them.

Princess he'd let out when she'd whine to take a piss but other than that he'd stopped all contact.

He whimpered as he pressed his face into the pillow beside him, and Abigail kicked at his bladder hard.

She missed her alpha too.

Will knew she did.

He'd read up on bonds between children and their parents in utero long before coming face to face with Hannibal. Babies bonded to their birth parents, obviously, but if they were able to experience them both bonds could easily form.

Will had hoped that wouldn't happen.

He rolled onto his side again, sighing, and put his hands on his belly.

"I'm sorry, baby," he whispered, his voice thick, "We can't."

The urge to get out of bed and go to him was so strong, too strong, and as the hours passed Will had to press his hands to his mouth to suppress a distress cry. Hannibal would come if he expressed one, he knew that, and Will was sure he'd be unable to resist him now.

Will looked at the clock beside the bed.

Two thirteen a.m.

Abby kicked his bladder hard and he tried to calm down more before he moved his hands.

Will took a deep breath and let it out slowly before he lowered them, heading for the bathroom. The cold loneliness of the bathroom did nothing to curb his weariness, the ache almost growing, and as he emptied his bladder he let out a whimper so soft it was barely audible.

"Damnit."

Moments later he froze as he heard the bedroom door open and a knock on the bathroom door made him shiver.

“Will?”

He pressed his hands to his mouth and leaned against the door.

“Will, I heard your distress cry. Even if you wished to hide it now you cannot. I think you’ve hidden yourself away long enough.”

Will slid down to the cold tile floor and tears fell down his face.

“I know you despise me,” Hannibal whispered, his voice oddly thick, “But denying yourself is not only detrimental to your own health it hurts Abigail as well.”

He closed his eyes and let his hand fall. A loud whimper filled the bathroom and he heard Hannibal’s annoyed growl in response.

“Allowing yourself the comfort of your alpha does not mean you need to give into my affections. It’s basic omegan biological need. You...you’ve denied me your company since the incident some days ago. I will not apologize for coming to your aid or staying by your side when you asked me to. Will...”

Will moved away from the door enough to open it a crack. He stuck his hand out and Hannibal touched his fingers. He moaned, entwining their fingers together. Hannibal sighed. “Thank you.”

His whole body seemed to calm down at the alpha’s touch.

“If this is all you will allow...I will stay all night if that’s what you need.”

He opened his eyes and stared up at the bathroom light as more tears fell.

“I will never use your biological responses against you. I promised you that.”

Will squeezed their hands together.

“I do not want you that way. I want...I want all of you. Every last part. I want you willingly. I want...”

He felt Hannibal kiss his hand and moaned, shaking at the touch.

“I want you to smell as you do now but for entirely different reasons.”

Will could not help the omegan purr that came from his mouth and he could smell Hannibal’s happiness at the sound.

He didn’t open the door and Hannibal didn’t make him.

Will fell asleep that way and when morning came he found himself in his bed again. He frowned, turning to bury his head into the pillow and was struck by Hannibal’s smell.

Hannibal had laid beside Will all night and done nothing but comfort him.

He stared up at the ceiling, shaken, and a loud purr came from deep within his throat that he let out with ease.

“Alpha...”

The word felt oddly important now, and he put his hand on his belly as Abby moved inside him.

Will smiled as he got dressed and smelled bacon and what had to be eggs cooking as he made his way down the stairs. He paused in the doorway of the kitchen to watch Hannibal cook but the alpha froze, turning to look at him in surprise.

His smile made Will's belly flutter.

“Good morning, Will.”

Will resisted the urge to purr again as he smiled.

“Good morning, *Alpha*.”

Chapter 14

Hannibal could feel Will's eyes on him.

The hostility of the past week seemed to melt away as he cooked, and when he turned to see Will petting Princess with such a bright smile he all but melted knowing he'd somehow changed their relationship for the better.

Last night had been torture for him, knowing Will required comfort but refusing to give into the basic need an omega has for their alpha, and when Will gave him his hand he'd experienced a happiness he'd never felt before.

The courting process had failed with Will but resisting his own instincts had apparently been just what the omega needed.

Perhaps Will had begun to trust him?

Hannibal looked away when Will's gaze came upon him again and finished the two omelets plating them in silence. The bacon, freshly bought and still not human, he continued with for a few more minutes until he put several pieces on their plates along with some fresh fruit. He turned in time to see Will still staring with barely a trace of the anger he was used to.

This could obviously be a ploy, he knew that, but the scent Will gave made him think otherwise.

Their status as fated true mates made it difficult for Will to disguise his disgust or pleasure to Hannibal. He was unsure if Will knew that but was not about to tell him. He walked over to Will and set the plate down in front of him.

"Bon appetit," he purred, smiling.

Will's smile softened as Hannibal handed him a glass of orange juice, and the blatant way their fingers brushed made Hannibal shiver even though his pleasure was soured at the cuffs on Will's wrists. "Thank you, Alpha."

He watched Will take the first bite and his moan of pleasure went right to Hannibal's cock.

"Amazing."

"I'm glad you approve," he said, his voice tight as he sat down several places away as usual.

The use of 'Alpha' twice already this morning was already having an effect on Hannibal's baser instincts and if he didn't know Will was pleased to be around him he'd suspect him to be manipulating for another purpose.

Perhaps it was happening naturally?

Will handed Princess a piece of bacon and the dog ate it quickly.

"I slept really well last night," Will said, "I haven't...it's been a while."

"I'm glad."

Will blushed a lovely shade of pink. "You..."

"I slept beside you, yes."

He watched Will's body react to the news with a bit of a sigh, but there did not seem to be displeasure.

“We didn’t...”

“You slept that was all. I will admit I watched you for a while. Your bedroom still smelled of your distress but that dissipated by morning.”

Will was a bit redder now as he ate, but it was more of a blush of embarrassment.

“I still don’t want to be here,” Will said softly, biting into a piece of bacon, “But I...I know it’s better to...be around you. Even the baby...”

“Abigail seemed rather enthusiastically moving around when I was beside you, yes. Perhaps she is an omega as well. That would account for her enthusiasm even more so than the biological connection. Omegan children often are attached to alphan parents even before they present as such.”

Will seemed a bit taken aback by that and stopped eating. He put his hand on his belly.

“Oh, I...oh.”

Hannibal frowned at Will’s sudden distressed scent.

“Will?”

“I...I mean...”

“What’s upset you?”

He shook his head. “I...does that mean you...I mean you’ve said...”

“Will, tell me. Please.”

Hannibal resisted the urge to come to him again. He gripped the counter’s edge hard as he watched tears fill Will’s eyes. “Does that mean when I have her...I mean you won’t need me then. If she’s gonna be okay without me and you...”

He got up so fast the plate rattled as his fork fell. The minute he got to Will he grabbed his hand again as he had last night, hoping that would be acceptable. Will squeezed his hand.

“You think that means I will kill you once you give birth?”

“I...”

“You are my true mate, Will. Killing you would be like killing myself. I’ve told you time and time again....”

Will shook his head and laughed, tears falling down his face. “You...”

Hannibal gritted his teeth.

“Last night was not about keeping the omega carrying my child out of distress.”

“What was it about then?” Will whispered, “You kidnapped me, forced me to live here...”

“It was about keeping MY omega out of distress.”

Will trembled against him and Hannibal brought the hand he held up to his mouth. He growled when Will let out a pleased purr as he pressed lips to Will’s skin.

“You’re a monster.”

“Yes,” he said, smiling, “But not to you.”

He felt Will shiver as he ran a finger over the top of his hand.

“Do you believe me when I say I would rather die than kill you?”

Will nodded mutely and Hannibal let him go before he headed back to his seat.

The rest of their meal was in relative silence but they didn’t look away from each other.

Not once.

But neither of them smiled.

Chapter 15

Boundaries.

Will knew that this situation wasn't going to end any time soon. The longer they were together the harder it would be to resist the feelings he had just being in the same room, so setting boundaries was the best thing to do.

So they shared space, but not too close.

He liked Hannibal's scent, craved it even, and yet he kept himself far enough away that he could experience what he and Abigail needed without getting too attached. This wasn't a courting, no matter what Hannibal wanted it to be, and though Will needed him he wasn't going to be an omegan stereotype.

Insta-love was the stuff of fairy tales and this wasn't a fairy tale.

Hannibal was an escaped serial killer who might not be able to kill him but that didn't mean he was forever material, even if he was the father of Will's child. All Will knew now was that he was stuck here for now, maybe forever, and he had no one else but the dog.

So he let his guard down just enough to enjoy having an alpha.

And soon became addicted.

Just the scent of Hannibal, the nearness, was a comfort he'd long denied himself for years and now he wanted to drown in it.

He didn't beg for attention though, or ever admit that.

This was still the man who kidnapped him against his will, but he was Will's alpha. He knew that now for sure. No other alpha had ever made Will feel this comfortable, or wanted, not once in his entire life. Alphas had never been a positive thing in his life and as the days passed he knew it was because they weren't Hannibal Lecter.

Hannibal loved to do things that were traditionally courting gestures like feeding Will, and giving him gifts along with compliments. None of those things he was really into but...security? Comfort? Will hadn't realized he'd craved that until now. The house that had for nearly a month now been his jail cell began to feel like a home.

Except for when Will looked down at his wrists and ankles.

He was still a prisoner and though the urge to run wasn't as urgent now he knew if Hannibal took away his shackles he would try.

For Abigail.

She'd get over the connection with Hannibal, if there really was one, and if he could get free he'd get over his own.

Will knew he had one, despite pretending that was impossible, but he'd get over it.

A connection wasn't like a bond.

And Hannibal had told him he'd rather die than kill him so if he ran nothing bad would happen, right?

So why did Will feel so reluctant to ask for the cuffs to be taken off?

He refused to think about why, instead letting himself indulge in the things he'd refused to enjoy since this all began.

Keeping himself far away day by day grew into nearness and the normality of sharing space. Will didn't ask for the nearness, only moved closer and Hannibal took care of the rest, and in turn another indulgence was breached.

Talking.

They'd talked on the boat, many times, and despite how even then he'd hated him Will felt an odd comfort in Hannibal's words no matter what they may be.

So he began to start conversations.

Will had never been one to start being social, or even bridging the gap between antisocial and friendliness. But the pull was getting harder to ignore and part of him knew Hannibal did not wish to 'win' his heart through nefarious means.

Or at least not yet.

Things started out small.

Just simple everyday talk.

'Good morning, Hannibal.'

'Goodnight, Hannibal.'

'This tastes good.'

‘Please.’

‘Thank you.’

The fearful thoughts after the bathroom incident made him wary of letting himself think too much. Will knew Hannibal wouldn’t hurt him, or even push him like he’d almost done those first days.

This alpha, *his* alpha, wanted him willing, and his patience became intoxicating to Will.

Someone wanting to get to know him, *really* know, was something he’d never experienced. No one wanted to delve into his broken mind, which was why after he’d failed to pass the psych evaluations to be an FBI agent he decided not to pursue that path any further. Or any path.

“I was almost an FBI agent.”

Hannibal looked up from his sketchbook and smiled. “I was unaware.”

“Yeah,” he sighed, rolling onto his side, “I couldn’t pass the psych tests.”

He felt Hannibal’s eyes on him as he ran hands down his belly and the scent of him drew closer.

“What did you do for work, Will?”

“I was a cop for six years, teacher for two and...because I couldn’t be an FBI agent I decided to...live off the government.”

Hannibal was quiet and Will looked up to see his smile wider now. "You took the Omega monthly stipend."

"Along with my pension, what little I have of it, and things were tight but that was enough."

"You lived a solitary life."

"I did," he whispered, "Though I had the dogs, I...didn't like people much. I didn't...do much with people at all. Especially alphas. I mostly avoided alphas and never much spent any time with one....until some alpha serial killer asshole kidnapped me."

"I will never apologize for the act," Hannibal purred, "Merely the circumstance in which things happened. If I had been able to court you properly..."

Will scooted away a bit and felt Abby kick. He winced. "Let's be real, Dr. Lecter. If you'd ever met me outside of this..."

Hannibal was suddenly closer to him than he'd been in days, and the scent made Will's headspin. He put one hand on Will's belly and the other on his cheek. "If I had met you outside of this I would've been shocked at our immediate connection, but still a difference in our social circles in no way could have stopped me from pursuing you."

Will let out a shaky breath. "You..."

Abby kicked again and they both smiled.

His belly flipped at the wonder in Hannibal's eyes. "She is strong."

"Yeah," Will whispered, "You said that before."

“But I had never been able to feel her movements until now. You did not allow me.”

“I’m not allowing you now, you just...did it.”

Hannibal didn’t move his hand. “And yet you are not pushing me away.”

Will felt his heart beat faster. “No, I’m not.”

They stared at each other silently, sharing in the moment, and he found himself leaning in closer. Hannibal’s breath tickled his lips. “Will...”

Suddenly Princess barked, startling them both, and Will forced himself to stand. The shackles made it harder but he managed. “I gotta go to the bathroom.”

“Will...”

He rushed up the stairs, not caring that there was a closer one below, and when he got into the bathroom in his bedroom he closed the door behind him.

There was a trickle of slick coming out his backside as he sat there, shaking, and put his head in his hands.

“Fuck.”

A minute later a knock.

“Will?”

He didn't move.

"I am going to begin dinner. Is there anything you'd like in particular?"

Will's whole body suddenly relaxed.

They were just gonna pretend like Will didn't almost kiss a serial killer.

"Um...no, not really."

"I will surprise you."

Will heard the sound of Hannibal leaving and let out another sigh.

"You already have."

Chapter 16

Want.

Hannibal had never experienced such intense want of anything until he met Will Graham. The constant need for him in all ways: scent, presence, and even just being, often made it difficult not to just take what he knew was his.

But this particular want came with caveats.

Will's trust was fleeting, and could disappear so fast that he knew if he gave into his alphan instincts there would be no way to earn it again.

So he waited, and watched, until just a moment ago when Will had been nearly ready to give into the need he knew they both felt. He watched Will make his escape and curbed the disappointment. This was a good thing, Will wanted him, and with time his pregnancy hormones would make it more difficult for him to deny. Hannibal could wait and bask in the scent of Will's want for him for as long as he could.

He didn't touch himself, though the need was there, only closed his eyes to immortalize the moment. The daydream of Will leaning in just a bit further, tasting him of his own volition, made Hannibal sigh with pleasure but he still did not take his cock in hand.

The wait would be worth denying himself that.

Hannibal cleaned and put away the dishes, still shaking. Then he went up the stairs slowly, giving Will the time to process, and was glad the door was not fully shut when he walked through Will's room.

The scent of his slick was there, thin but enough for him to feel it in his bones, and when he got to the bathroom door he knocked.

“Will?”

There was no answer.

“I am going to begin dinner. Is there anything you’d like in particular?”

The lack of answer made Hannibal resist the urge to push for Will to talk about what had happened and he was soon rewarded.

“Um...no, not really.”

He smiled, leaning his head against the door frame to breathe in the faint scent wafting through the crack in the door. “I will surprise you.”

Hannibal turned to leave, and was just steps from the door when he heard another reply.

“You already have.”

His whole body warmed and the alpha inside preened as he left the bedroom to start dinner. Princess was waiting down the stairs, ready to go outside, and he followed her out watching as she relieved herself on the lawn.

Will had never seen the backyard, nor had he viewed the pool, which suddenly made him frown.

Perhaps a discussion about Will coming outside was in store now that their relationship was blooming? Lack of sunlight had made him add plenty of vitamins to Will’s dinners but still he knew that did not make up for the caged in feeling his omega must have.

Will would probably be delighted to come outside.

The view from the edge of their property was spectacular, and would show Will just how secluded they were from the nearest neighbors. A thought occurred that Will might take this as a sign to manipulate him into letting Will have more freedom and aid in an escape quickly passed.

Will may not be entirely happy with him as a choice of mate but he wouldn't be so devious.

Hannibal took Princess inside and began dinner.

“Steak?”

Hannibal was startled at Will's arrival, so lost in making their meal, and smiled when he saw the flush to his cheeks. “Yes, you seemed to enjoy steak the last time I served it so...”

Princess was in Will's arms as he sat on one of the stools and he wondered now if the dog was being used as a shield. He couldn't smell Will's slick, though the memory was enough to make his body warm again.

“Doesn't everyone?” Will asked, licking his lips.

Hannibal nodded. “Yes, I suppose.”

He turned back to finish up the cooking, and added some extra spice to the glazed carrots.

Will's gaze was felt as he moved, every step a performance, and when he checked on the biscuits he bent over a bit more to show off his backside.

“Dinner will be done shortly. I apologize if we have yet to use the dining room, I...”

He turned to see Will smiling at him.

“There’s a dining room?”

Hannibal frowned. “Yes, it’s just off the kitchen. You sat at the counter when we first shared a meal so I thought you’d be more comfortable there.”

Will leaned on the counter more. “I’m fine here.”

“Alright.”

They shared another look before Hannibal went back to the food.

He finished quickly, eager to talk, and set the plates as best he could given the rush. Will began to eat even before he sat down and the quiet did not feel strained. Things felt comfortable, which was why he decided perhaps he should bring up what he’d thought of earlier.

“I took Princess outside to do her business. It’s quite nice this evening.”

“Hmm, I wouldn’t know,” Will said, taking a sip of his juice.

“Would you like to?”

Hannibal frowned when Will’s face fell. “What?”

“Would you like to go outside? It’s been over a month since your arrival and I thought perhaps you would...enjoy the view. I could even take off your shackles if you’d...”

Will paled. “No.”

“Will?”

He got up from the table with that same sudden rush that he’d left the living room earlier.

“I’m...I don’t want to eat anymore. I’m not hungry.”

“Will, what’s...”

Will tried to rush as he best he could, and ended up tangling himself in the shackles on his legs. Hannibal got to him just in time before he fell, catching Will in his arms.

“Let go of me!” Will growled, tears in his eyes.

“Will, tell me what’s wrong. I thought you’d be pleased.”

Will shook his head. “Fuck, just...let me go.”

“Will, tell me.”

He glared at Hannibal. “No.”

“I don’t wish for you to feel like a prisoner.”

A tear fell down Will's cheek. "I don't...I....don't take them off."

"Will?"

"I'll run," Will whispered, his voice so soft Hannibal barely heard it, "If you take them off and let me out I'll run."

"I see," Hannibal said, his chest aching, "And you do not wish to have that freedom?"

"I...."

He ran his fingers down Will's cheek. "Tell me."

"I..."

"I will not judge you for anything you say, nor will I be angry."

Will laughed, rubbing at his eyes. "I wish you would be."

"Will..."

"I've started to like it," he whispered, "I...I like being around you, I like...just having an alpha. It's comfortable. I..."

Hannibal smiled. "And yet."

“If you let me off these cuffs I’ll try to run. I have to try. My daughter is more important to me than anything, Hannibal. She...she deserves the world.”

He took Will’s hand up to his lips and kissed it softly. “And I wish to give you both that and more. Do you not understand how important making you and Abigail happy is to me?”

“You’re a serial killer!” Will yelled, laughing, “You kidnapped me! You...I’m not...”

“You can blame other reasons on these feelings if it makes you feel better. Your hormones, the environment, or even Stockholm syndrome. Whatever will make this easier for you to give into, Will.”

“You don’t mean that.”

“I want you more than I’ve ever wanted anything.”

Will closed his eyes. “But you want me willing,” he said, his voice thick, “You want me...all of me. I know you do.”

Hannibal ran his thumb across Will’s lips and was pleased with the shiver he got in response.

“I do, but...”

He watched Will’s eyes open slowly and could smell his slick in the air. “I’m not there yet, Alpha,” Will said, moving Hannibal’s hand down, “And if I do get there...I want you willing too. All of you.”

“Will...”

Will wiped his eyes again. "I'll go outside if you cuff our wrists together. Okay?"

"Yes, that's...fine."

"And I...I don't want them off. Not yet."

Hannibal took Will's hand in his again and squeezed. "How will I know when you do?"

Will smiled. "You'll know."

Hannibal smiled. "You sound quite sure."

"I am."

The difference in Will's response to him just weeks ago so close was striking. He could see want in his eyes but there was no haze. His eyes were quite clear.

"You gonna help me up so I can finish eating?"

Hannibal helped him slowly, and lifted him up onto the stool with ease. Will's slick scent was in the air now, fully exposed, and it took all he had to go back to his seat.

"Tomorrow."

Will smiled. "Tomorrow."

They went back to eating in silence, but traded several glances all the while.

Will wanted to be here so desperately he was willing to remain a prisoner. That should not make Hannibal so very happy and yet his chest ached with the knowledge. He'd have his mate and family soon.

But not yet.

Chapter 17

“It is a good view.”

Will sat beside Hannibal on an outdoor chair, their hands tight together, and let himself enjoy the moment. He hadn't been outside in weeks and the air smelled like the many flowers that permeated the yard.

“I'm glad you approve.”

The cuffs clinked together as he resisted the urge to lay his head on the alpha's shoulder and refused to let himself take lingering looks for an escape.

Princess barked excitedly at Will's feet and he reached down to pet her, not looking anywhere but out at the nice view.

“Don't tell me where we are, ok?”

“Of course.”

He laid back on the chair, an almost too comfortable one for an outside set, and relaxed.

“We can have dinner outside if you'd like.”

“And lunch,” Will said.

“And lunch.”

The wetness seeping into the cushion underneath his ass Will ignored. Pregnancy hormones, like Hannibal had said, and he didn't want to give in.

Not yet.

Abby kicked and he took their joint hands to put Hannibal's on his belly. She kicked again.

"She's eager to come into the world. That's a good sign."

"Is it?"

"Yes, very good."

He kept his hand there for what felt like hours, and before long Will's stomach growled.

"I think it's time for me to make lunch."

Will sighed. "Okay."

"If you'd like to take a nap I could wake you?"

He nodded as they headed back inside and Hannibal uncuffed himself to move the other to Will's own wrist. He rubbed at the marks there, getting more prominent now, and they shared a look but no words.

Will wasn't ready.

The quickness in which he fell asleep was odd, but Will's whole body felt so relaxed he wasn't surprised. He was surprised, however, to fall right into an unfamiliar dream.

Will didn't often dream, or remember anything that wasn't nightmares.

This particular dream was not a nightmare.

He knew he'd fallen asleep alone but in the dream he woke up in Hannibal's arms. Soft kisses and gentle gland bites made him moan clutching at Hannibal.

"More," he sighed, pulling him closer.

"So eager for me now, aren't you?"

His slick leaked through Will's briefs and Hannibal peeled them off, smirking as Will watched him lick down slowly. He moaned, clutching the sheets, and arched up off the bed when Hannibal's tongue went inside him.

"Alpha...."

The feeling wasn't enough, couldn't be, and Will pulled at his hair roughly.

"Mylimasis," Hannibal purred, mouth glistening with Will's slick and pupils dilated, "Tell me what you need."

"Fuck me, knot me, FILL ME!" he growled.

He sobbed when Hannibal came back up again, shaking so badly with need, and Hannibal stared down at him just before plunging inside. Will's moans seemed to echo off the walls,

and he clutched his alpha tight as he was fucked so hard he could feel it in his very being.

“Bite me,” Will moaned, “Oh god, please bite me. Mate me, Alpha. Please, I lo---”

Hannibal bit down hard and Will screamed, biting into his neck in return as he came.

He woke up when he heard Hannibal’s voice.

“Will? It’s time for lunch.”

Will could feel the slick soaked sheets beneath him and his hole felt desperately unfilled.

“Fuck,” he said, voice shaking, “Fuck, fuck...I’ll be right there!”

He pulled the sheets off his bed, cheeks flushed, and hurriedly changed his clothes after going to the bathroom. The smell of his slick was in the air and only made things worse. Will narrowly missed tripping over his leg shackles again as he rushed to the door.

Hannibal was paused halfway down the stairs and Will watched his nostrils flare as he stared down at him.

“Sleep well?”

Will blushed. “Don’t.”

He felt Abby kick and rubbed at his belly in response.

Hannibal reached out to grab his shoulder. “Will...”

“Don’t, ok? Just...don’t. I haven’t had a dirty dream since I was fifteen years old. I...fuck, this is embarrassing.”

“There’s no need to be embarrassed.”

“Yet here I am completely mortified.”

“Do you still wish to have lunch outside?”

Will thought for a moment of having lunch handcuffed to Hannibal for an extended period of time. “No.”

“Alright then,” Hannibal said, “I will tell you that this is perfectly natural. I’m surprised you didn’t experience it sooner.”

Will blushed, sitting at the counter.. “It’s perfectly natural for me to get slick around the serial killer who kidnapped me?”

“No,” Hannibal said, his smile soft, “It’s natural for you to get more easily aroused during pregnancy in general but being around your true alpha and remaining untouched by him would make things a bit more difficult.”

Will swallowed past the lump in his throat. “I’m not...we’re not...you...”

“That was not a request,” Hannibal said, sitting, “But if you needed my assistance in other ways I would be more than willing to help.”

Will’s blush deepened as he looked at him “What...what other ways?”

“I would provide you with objects saturated in my scent for masturbatory purposes.”

Will’s sudden purr made him gasp and cover his mouth. “I see you like the idea.”

The fish in front of him suddenly made Will ravenous, and he ate to ignore the slick that seemed to gush at the words.

“You’re not yet ready for any closer connection, as you’ve said, and I don’t wish to see you unsatisfied.”

He swallowed, shaking, and was worried another purr would come out when he spoke but thankfully it didn’t. “Eventually even that won’t be enough, will it?”

Hannibal took a bit of his fish. “No, it won’t.”

Will let out a shaky breath. “I’ll think about it.”

He felt his stomach flutter when Hannibal smiled at him. “Take your time. Though can I ask you something about the dream?”

“Hannibal...”

“Just one question.”

“Fine.”

“Did I give you a mating bite in the dream you had?”

Will looked down at his food again and took another bite. His cheeks were on fire now. “Yes.”

“Hmm,” Hannibal murmured, “And did you bite me in return?”

He let out a long breath and stared into Hannibal’s eyes. “Yes.”

“Is that when you ejaculated?”

“ *Yes* ,” Will purred, shaking.

The smirk Hannibal gave should not have made him so weak kneed yet Will felt dizzy.

“I see.”

They ate in silence, the air filled with Will’s slick, and when he was finished Hannibal lingered a bit too long. Will looked at him, licking his lips, and wiggled on the stool.

“Hannibal...”

He stepped back. “I apologize,” he whispered, “The scent of you aroused by me is intoxicating.”

Will felt another gush of slick release when he smelled Hannibal’s own arousal so close. There was no haze still to blame on how hard he had to clutch the counter.

“The clothes,” he said, his voice shaking, “Just...leave it outside my room.”

“Of course.”

He waited until Hannibal went to the sink and got up the stairs as fast as he possibly could. The room still smelled like his slick, worse when he closed the door, and he went right to the shower hoping to lessen the need.

Will pressed his forehead against the tile, his aching hole so unfilled he could hardly stand the emptiness, and wondered if there was such a thing as pregnancy heat. That’s what it felt like, a heat, and if it lasted any longer he would be begging for Hannibal’s knot.

And he knew Hannibal would give it to him.

The colder he made the water the more his body seemed to cool down, so much so that when he got out of the shower and back into the bedroom he wasn’t as overtaken by the lingering smell of his own slick. No, it wasn’t the slick that got him.

It was the scent coming from underneath his door.

Will forced himself not to run toward the scent and when he pulled the article of clothing into his room he was struck by Hannibal’s scent so much he purred. His alpha had given him a pair of black silk briefs that were stained with precum.

And a note.

You will be worth the wait.

He pressed the underwear to his face, breathing in, and let his towel drop as he headed for the bed. Slick gushed out of him again, a torrent now, and as stuck two fingers inside he moaned so loud he knew Hannibal would hear.

Hannibal wanted him desperately, had been so close, and yet he hadn't given Will a piece of clothes stained with his come.

He would wait until he was inside him.

Will added a third finger and began to stroke, shaking as he smelled his alpha's arousal.

"Alpha...."

He came so fast he was dizzy with it, biting down on the fabric, and his vision blurred with the intensity of his orgasm.

Abby kicked at him as he let the fabric fall from his mouth and tried to catch his breath.

"We've got a good alpha, don't we Abby?" he asked, laughing up at the ceiling.

She kicked him again in response and he felt her move around inside him.

"Is that a yes?"

Will clutched the briefs in his hand, feeling suddenly exhausted, and tumbled off into sleep. He dreamed again, but not like the dream he'd had before.

This time they were sitting outside by the pool having a picnic.

Hannibal was holding a dark haired baby in his arms.

"I love you," Will said, smiling at him.

“I know, Mylimasis, I know,” Hannibal said, kissing Abigail’s cheek, “Is it not easier now that you can admit that?”

He woke up alone in the dark and turned on the bedside light.

Will was not at all surprised to find himself completely clean from his strange pregnancy heat, nor was he upset. He sighed.

He wasn’t in love, despite what his subconscious was telling him, and yet he knew the longer he was here the closer he would be to just that.

Was being happy worth bonding himself to a serial killer?

And after all this could he really ever bond to someone else?

Chapter 18

“I have a guest coming over today.”

Will paused with the fork to his mouth. “Who?”

“Chiyoh.”

The angry set to Will’s chin made him frown. “Oh, *her* .”

“She’s bringing me some supplies.”

He frowned. “Supplies?”

“For Abigail’s birth.”

Will put both his hands over his belly. “Oh.”

“You can stay in your room if you’d like.”

“Maybe I’d like to have a conversation with her about forcing pregnant omegas in and out of airplanes after helping them be kidnapped by escaped serial killers. She ignored me the last time I met her.”

“Will...”

He moved his hand down into his lap and with it Hannibal’s did the same. Will’s happy scent was gone now, blowing away in the wind, and as he watched Will fold into himself he

wondered why.

“Chiyoh is an alpha.”

There was an odd relaxation in Will’s body at his words.

“So? I didn’t smell alpha or omega on her the last time. I don’t care.”

“I was unsure if you were uncomfortable because she may be omega or if your discomfort was for another reason. Any lingering thoughts of running would be useless against her as she will not help you.”

He watched Will flinch. “Or speak to me.”

Hannibal remembered Will trying to yell at Chiyoh on the plane but she’d ignored him quite easily. He’d given up after a while and just slept most of the ride after. Though he’d spouted off things to her again as she helped him take Will into the house.

“I need to pee.”

“Of course.”

They walked into the house with Princess, who rushed over to her bowl.

“It’s time for her to eat. I’ll uncuff...”

“I can wait,” Will said, not looking at him.

The food Hannibal prepared for her was in the refrigerator, freshly blended, and as he pulled out the bowl Will's arm brushed his. They both looked at each other.

"If you don't wish for her to be in the house again I can meet her elsewhere."

Will shook his head. "It's not...I just haven't seen anyone other than you in a long time and I just..."

Hannibal reached out to touch Will's cheek and was thrilled when Will pressed against his hand.

"You think she'll think less of you?"

Will sighed. "Last time she saw me I was fighting like hell to get out of here and now...she'll think I'm under your spell and judge me accordingly."

"It is I who am under your spell, Will. If that is not already established."

"Which one of us jerked off to lingering scent on the other's tie last night?"

Hannibal smiled. "You."

Will followed him as he laid the dog's bowl down, their hands still together, and when they rose up again they were quite close. He loved to watch Will be affected by his scent, though the mindless haze had long since stopped the more connected they were. "So, I think I know which one of us is gonna be judged as a hopeless omega."

"Will..."

He held up their joint hands. "You can put them back on now."

Hannibal took the key out from his left jacket pocket and unlocked his own. The marks on Will's wrist made his instincts flare up, reaching out to touch. "This side is getting less pronounced now that you've started to go outside with just one."

Will looked away. "Put it back on."

The sound of the cuff connecting once again was not a pleasant one for either of them but Will wanted this. Hannibal watched him walk to the couch and turn on the television set, leaning back to view some mindless dog program he himself did not watch.

Chiyoh was scheduled to come soon with some last minute things he'd procured through various shell accounts for the birth. Will would be full term soon and if he did not have the means to ensure a safe delivery he'd never forgive himself.

She'd asked no questions when asked to retrieve the items, though he was sure she'd have some words for him when she arrived, and he would easily answer the ones she voiced then. Though perhaps she wouldn't have any at all.

Hannibal sat beside Will on the couch, close and touching but not as he'd like. Despite their growing connection his omega was still holding back, and he wouldn't push. Will would come to him. He'd known that from the very first time they'd laid eyes on each other.

"I'm not sure why you watch these types of things."

Will smiled. "I like dogs, you know that."

"Yes, but you have a real dog beside you. Watching other people's dogs..."

He looked at Hannibal. "I'm stuck inside and it makes me happy, Alpha. Is that okay with you?"

Hannibal was very much unable to resist when Will called him Alpha, and Will clearly knew that judging by his smile. “Of course.”

The sound of the door alarm got Hannibal out of his seat, and Will startled out of his dog program. “She’s here?”

“Yes, a bit early.”

He attempted to move but Will grabbed his arm. “Wait.”

“What is it?”

Will shook his head and let go, turning away. “Nevermind, it’s nothing.”

Hannibal frowned. “Will...”

“I’ve gone most of my life being judged by people as ‘weird’ for the shit I did or thought. Now she’s coming back here after...I just...”

“She does not have to come inside, Will. It’s your choice.”

The indecision in Will’s eyes made Hannibal’s chest ache. He wanted nothing more than for Will to be happy here, to feel like it was a home, and if Chiyoh’s arrival was only a reminder that it wasn’t then perhaps he shouldn’t allow her in at all.

Will sighed. “It’s fine, let her in.”

He didn't move. "You're certain?"

"Yeah."

Hannibal was not eager to have Chiyoh come and ruin the burgeoning bliss he felt was so very close to being theirs. But that did not stop him from opening the door to her moments later.

"Good morning."

Chiyoh stood on the porch, a large black vehicle behind her, and her gaze was quizzical.

"Good morning," Hannibal said, "Come in, please."

She took one large inhale and closed her eyes as she inhaled the scent of the room. "It no longer smells sour here."

"No, it does not."

Chiyoh smiled. "I see."

"You see nothing. Come inside."

He watched her surveil the room as if searching for something, anything, to explain the change in the scent of the house and stop when she spotted Will.

"He is still chained."

“Yes.”

“And yet...”

Hannibal closed the door rather loudly. “How was the flight? Did you have any turbulence?”

Chiyoh took off her jacket as she came inside and kept it over her shoulder. It was leather, expensive, and Hannibal imagined a gift from him he hadn’t known he gave her.

“Is it cold, I wasn’t aware?”

“It isn’t.”

She didn’t take her eyes off of Will, nor did he do the same to her. Memories of the last time they’d seen each other came unbidden to him again. Will’s tears, her indifference, and the strength in which they’d both dragged him inside.

Like a prisoner.

He didn’t much like the reminder.

“It was difficult to get what you asked for but I did as asked,” Chiyoh said, leaning against the counter, “All of it including the machines.”

“I’m sure it was expensive.”

She smiled. “You have more than enough money left, Hannibal. you won’t even realize it’s gone.”

“I suppose so. I...”

“Are you going to even acknowledge I’m here?” Will asked, sounding rather angry, “Or just look at me like I’m part of the house.”

“Aren’t you?” she asked, “You’re remain chained so you’re still...unbent. Though you do smell more calm.”

“Unbent? What does that mean?”

She looked at Hannibal. “Do you need help unloading? I left my people far away from the location but I can call them.”

“Don’t ignore me!”

“Chiyoh...”

Chiyoh looked at Will. “I can see why he likes you. Challenges were always his most favorite thing.”

“Stop talking in riddles! What does unbent mean? Is that some sort of code?” he looked at Hannibal, “What have you been telling her?”

“Will...”

Chiyoh sighed. “Even pregnant omegas can be fighters, Mr. Graham. You are a fighter, not easily bent over to take an alpha’s knot. You obviously know what *that* means. I was giving you a compliment. Until you are bent to his whims and his mark, you’re unbent and on your own.”

“And when I am?”

“Then I will serve the Lecter mate as I serve the only surviving heir. The Lecters saved me, and I will protect them and their family until my last dying breath. I will not let what happened to....”

“Chiyoh.”

She looked at him. “You have not told him?”

“Told me, what? Why...”

“Wait for me outside, please.”

He watched her hesitate and immediately regretted letting her into the house again. She looked at Will and frowned. “Have him tell you about Mischa.”

“Chiyoh...”

She glared at him. “I will wait for you outside.”

And with those words she left the house.

Hannibal sighed.

“Who’s Mischa?”

“We’ll talk about it later.”

“No, we’ll talk about it now. You want me to get to know you, and she knows all this stuff I don’t. How am I supposed to...”

“ *Later* , Will. I cannot talk about this now. Not...now.”

Will frowned at him. “Tell me who Mischa is first and I’ll drop it for now.”

Hannibal felt like his chest was in a vice. “Will...”

“Alpha, please,” Will whispered, “Just..tell me.”

“Mischa was my sister.”

Will was quiet.

“Now may I go?”

“Yeah.”

Hannibal left the house so fast he nearly stumbled off the porch, hands shaking as he tried to calm himself. He hadn’t meant for Will to know his past, or think more about the things he’d done. Not now, not until they were bonded.

His past murders were the biggest obstacle in the way of their happiness.

What would Will do when he found out what happened the first time he'd let out the monster inside him?

Chapter 19

Hannibal didn't come back inside till after dark.

Will heard the large truck Chiyoh had brought whatever supplies Hannibal asked for in leave hours before that. The whole Mischa mystery festered in his mind the whole time. Though there were things that weren't a mystery.

Obviously Mischa was dead.

Hannibal was the 'only surviving heir' to whatever weird protector thing Chiyoh had going with him which meant there was no one else left.

What had happened to Hannibal's family?

He made himself lunch while Hannibal was gone from the leftovers in the fridge, a sandwich that tasted like shit compared to the stuff he'd grown used to since he'd eaten Hannibal's cooking and an orange. The growing dread made him almost go outside but his fear won out and he fell asleep staring at the door that didn't open.

Hannibal's voice woke him.

"Will."

"Mmm..."

Will leaned into his touch, breathing in and calming down again after so many hours apart.

“You fell asleep, Mylimasis.”

The word all but jolted Will out of his half sleep. “What’s that mean anyway?”

“I’ll tell you some other time.”

“Mmm...you were gone awhile.”

“I was making certain the equipment was in order.”

Will cuddled Hannibal’s chest, eyes still half closed, and smiled. “Liar.”

He felt Hannibal’s hand go down his back.

“I was...worried.”

He blinked, moved to sit up, and wiped the sleep from his eyes. “About what?”

“Chiyoh should not have told you about...”

“Mischa,” Will finished, hands on his belly now, “Your sister.”

“Yes.”

“Why?”

“We have not yet shared many stories of our pasts.”

“No,” Will admitted, feet under him now as he leaned against the back of the couch, “But that doesn’t mean we shouldn’t. All of me, right? That’s what you want?”

“Yes.”

“And I want all of you, so...”

“Not exactly all of me,” Hannibal said, “There are parts of me that you’d rather not have to think about.”

Will reached out for Hannibal’s hand on the couch, far enough away not to be too close now, and squeezed. “A few, yeah.”

“And Mischa...and everything that happened before and after...is part of that. Or a symptom of that. I was dark long before things happened but those events made it much easier for me to embrace the darkness inside me.”

“Hannibal, just...tell me. I know it’s obviously bad, but all of you, right?”

The look on Hannibal’s face was unlike any Will had seen before.

He was scared.

“I suppose,” he sighed, leaning back against the couch and not looking at Will, “My parents were rather well off, as you more than likely guessed.”

Will squeezed his hand again. “The whole ‘Lecter heir’ thing made me think that, yeah.”

“One evening our home was broken into and my entire family was taken hostage.”

“How old were you?”

“Twelve.”

Will moved closer to him, hands still together, and kept the other on his belly. Abby kicked a bit, obviously worked up from Will’s own emotions, but he didn’t move.

“Shit. How old was Mischa?”

“She was seven. We were very close, Mischa and I. My parents were rather protective and kept the both of us home schooled. Between Father and Mother I learned quite well, but I did not interact with any children outside of Mischa until...”

“Until she was gone.”

Hannibal looked at Will with tears in his eyes. “Yes.”

“Did they kill them in front of you?”

“No, but I could hear them scream. I had nightmares about those screams until I replaced them with others that made me feel no fear.”

Will came closer. “What did they even want?”

“My father was rather highly regarded by people in the government at the time. They were dissenters who did not agree with the friends he kept. I don’t think they wanted much of anything, truth be told. Just fear and blood.”

“So they just...”

“They kept Mischa and I bound for nearly a week after. We were fed very little and when we were I gave her everything.”

Will bit down on his bottom lip, shaking. “And then?”

“I blamed myself for a very long time after,” Hannibal whispered, looking away again, “I fell asleep from my exhaustion and hunger. My body could not take it at that young age.”

“You didn’t--”

“They yanked me out of sleep forcefully and I found Mischa gone. I screamed for her, fought them, but they laughed at my fear. Though hours later they brought me some stew and in my hunger I ate without thought.”

He felt tears run down his cheeks as he came closer, nearly laying on Hannibal’s shoulder now, and when Hannibal looked at him again Will knew what had happened even without the words.

“They laughed and asked me how my sister tasted. I tried to vomit and found I could not. I cried myself to sleep and when I woke again they had brought more.”

“Alpha...”

“I stared at the stew for hours as it grew cold, hungry still, and the darkness I had fought for so long I let come to the surface. I wanted them dead, Will. I needed them gone. So I did

what I had to do. Mischa would've wanted me to eat her rather than them. I know it."

Will put his hand on Hannibal's cheek. "And then?"

"I presented as alpha."

His eyes widened. "That was when you presented?"

"Yes," Hannibal smiled through his tears, "My father would've been so proud, though my presenting was not the normal type. I did not ache for an omega. I ached for blood. I killed the first of them when he brought me more food. I bit off his ear and sank my teeth into his neck. The restraints were easy to get off with the weapons he had. Killing the rest of them was even easier. Any pain they tried to give me as I killed them was nothing compared to what I already felt. Knowing they were gone did nothing to curb that and when it was all over I ran."

"Where?"

"To the woods. I did not think myself worth living amongst the regular world anymore. I was a beast, mostly, until I was found by my Uncle Robertus and Aunt Murasaki. They brought me back as best they could, and sent me to all the most prestigious schools. I was the perfect alpha to most people, though no one knew the beast I really was. Not for a very long time."

Will climbed into his lap and Hannibal never looked away. He put a hand on Hannibal's other cheek. "Why were you afraid to tell me that?"

"I haven't told that story for a very long time. The last time I did my Uncle made me promise never to utter it again."

"Alpha..."

“I have not killed anyone since that night weeks ago when I took you but it’s a part of me. The ache. I enjoyed watching every single person I killed die, make no mistake about that. I need to feed that ache in some way in order to survive.”

He leaned in close and pressed their foreheads together.

“Then feed on me,” Will whispered, his voice shaking, “Fill the ache with me, Alpha. Take...take me.”

Hannibal let out a low growl. “Will...”

He pressed his lips to Hannibal’s softly, hardly touching, and groaned when he felt Hannibal deepen the kiss. The taste of him made Will’s entire body come alive and when he moved his hands up the shackles hit Hannibal’s chin.

They pulled apart, panting, and stared into each other’s eyes.

“Now?” Hannibal asked.

Will nodded, hardly able to speak.

He watched Hannibal pull a key from his neck and the minute the cuffs fell he expected the fear to return. All he felt was the slick leaking down his ass and rolled back to lift his legs. Hannibal ran his hand down Will’s clothed leg and when he took off the leg shackles Will whined.

“Tell me.”

“Hannibal...”

Hannibal looked at him and a tear fell down his cheek. “What do you want, Will?”

“You,” Will whispered, “I want you.”

“What do you want from me?”

“Please.”

“Will...”

Hannibal ran his hand up Will’s leg again and he whimpered. “Your knot,” he said, purring, “I want your knot. Oh god, Alpha please give me your knot! I...I want to feel you, I want...”

Will felt like he was lost in the haze again but knew that wasn’t the case. Every word he was saying was his own. Hannibal lifted Will up into his arms easily, which only made his slick flow faster as he pressed kisses to Hannibal’s neck.

“Will...”

“I don’t need a bed, I need...”

Hannibal kissed him again, his tongue delving into Will’s mouth and touching every inch of him, and everything else faded away. He hardly remembered getting upstairs, though they somehow were, and pieces of clothing fell away so fast soon they were both naked. Will ground against Hannibal’s cock, shaking as they continued to taste each other, and when suddenly Hannibal groaned sucking on his neck he could’ve laughed.

“Will...I’m sorry...I was...overwhelmed.”

He laughed, kissing him again, and smiled. “If I can make you come that fast I must be doing something right.”

Hannibal’s smile made his heart beat faster. “Very right. Though I do believe I owe you that same pleasure.”

Will was rolled onto his back and purred as Hannibal parted his legs.

“Alpha...”

“I’ve wished to taste you from the very first time I smelled your slick. May I?”

“Please.”

The first touch of Hannibal’s tongue made him cry out, pulling on the alpha’s hair, and when he began to grind against his mouth Will was lost. Hannibal ate him out with vigor, growling as Will gushed against his tongue, and when he came it was with a shot that seemed to reverberate off the walls of Hannibal’s bedroom.

“Oh god yes! Yes! Yes! Fuck don’t stop! Hannibal don’t...”

Hannibal kept on thrusting his tongue inside as Will came down from his orgasm, gasping and shaking until he was settled. He lifted his mouth and came up to kiss Will with his lips covered in slick. The taste of his own juices should not have tasted so amazing but they did.

They did.

The minute they parted both were smiling again.

“I’m very happy, Will.”

“So am I.”

“The ache...”

“Is it satisfied?” Will asked, grinning.

“Not yet, but it’s getting there.”

Will laughed into his neck and laid on Hannibal’s chest. Hannibal took his hand and ran fingers across his red wrist. “These will fade.”

“Yeah,” Will whispered, tears in his eyes again, “I...”

“I can remake them, if that’s what you prefer.”

“I do,” Will said, “I do.”

Hannibal kissed his wrists one by one, and Will closed his eyes.

“I will make you so happy, Will.”

“I know.”

Will felt a sudden exhaustion as all the fight was taken out of him and let himself sleep in the arms of his alpha. There was no place he’d rather be.

Hours later Abigail woke Will out by Abigail kicking his bladder. He sighed, rolling off Hannibal, and headed for the bathroom. He closed the door so he didn't wake Hannibal and turned on the lights before he relieved himself.

“Just had to wake me up, didn't you Abby?”

She kicked him again and he smiled.

“Yeah, yeah.”

Will went to the sink to wash his hands and when he looked up it felt like every event from the past few hours disappeared.

What was he doing?

He stared at his free wrists and ankles with tears in his eyes. There was no evidence that he'd been in Hannibal's arms and felt the most intense pleasure he'd ever had tonight. It felt like a dream.

A dream he shouldn't want to make a reality.

Will looked into the mirror and shook his head.

“No,” he whispered, “No, no, I...”

Abby kicked at his belly again and tears fell down his face. “Baby girl...I...”

What was he doing?

He opened the door to the bathroom and turned off the light staring into the bedroom. There was a small sliver of moonlight that illuminated Hannibal asleep in bed. His alpha had never looked more relaxed.

“I’m sorry,” Will whispered, slowly picking up his clothes as he left the bedroom.

He got dressed through his tears, and slowly walked down the stairs.

Princess got up from her bed, excited, and Will shushed her. “No. Stay.”

She whined.

“Stay,” Will whispered, his voice thick, “Be a good girl.”

She didn’t move.

Will found a pair of shoes by the door, not his but he didn’t care, and ran out into the night.

He had to get out now before it was too late.

Chapter 20

The dog was what woke him.

Hannibal rolled over, reached out for Will, and found the bed empty.

“Will?”

The side of the bed Will had fallen asleep on was cold.

He felt the sudden betrayal wash over him.

Will was gone.

This entire thing had been an elaborate set up in order to get him to remove the cuffs and let his guard down. Had Will been laughing at him this entire time? Pretending to care and yet amused at Hannibal’s devotion?

He got up from the bed slowly and did not bother to dress as he walked down the stairs. Princess was still barking like mad as he got to the door and moved her away. “Stay.”

Hannibal cared very little for the cold breeze as it hit his skin when he got outside, and tears prickled at the edges of his eyes as he saw Will standing by the gate.

“Were you going to climb?”

Will froze and turned around slowly. The wide eyed look he gave made Hannibal even angrier.

“I...”

“I can open the gate for you,” Hannibal hissed, “Or I can give you the code. It’s twelve fourteen. Mischa’s birthday. I apologize if I did not include it in the story. I was unaware you were plotting to escape.”

“No,” Will said, coming closer, “I...”

Hannibal smiled. “I will applaud you on your acting abilities. I very much believed you wanted me for more than an orgasm.”

“Alpha...”

“Do *not* ,” he growled, heading for the alarm box, “Call me that. Your ruse is now finished.”

“Hannibal, I didn’t...”

He pressed the buttons, hands shaking, and the gate opened with ease. “You are free to go. Though I’m not sure how long you’ll last. The closest neighbor is several miles away and it’s cold. Can I get you a jacket?”

Will didn’t move. “I...”

Hannibal’s lip curled. “Did you laugh at me, Will? This entire time did you laugh at how easily I was led to believe you were beginning to care for me? Did...”

“NO!” Will yelled, rushing to him only for Hannibal to push him away, “I..I don’t...I can’t stay here. I’m not...”

“Do you need a ride? I can call the police and have them escort you. Would that be better? Would you like them to take me out in handcuffs? We can sit beside each other and perhaps I can---”

Will shook his head and tears fell down his face. “NO! Alpha, I just...”

Hannibal growled and rushed to Will, grabbing his wrists. “DO NOT SAY THAT WORD TO ME AGAIN! DO YOU HEAR ME?”

“Please...” Will whispered, “Please, I...”

“Go,” he hissed, “Go now because if you stay I will kill you after Abigail is born.”

Will’s eyes widened as tears fell down his face. “You said...killing me would be like killing yourself. You said...”

“Feelings fade,” Hannibal said, not letting his voice betray the tightness of his chest, “And I’d rather not feel this anymore.”

He could smell the distress seeping out of Will, feel his upset, and yet it all seemed so very far away. “Alpha...Hannibal. Please. I made a mistake. I got out here and realized I couldn’t go. I don’t...I can’t go.”

Hannibal forced himself not to fall for Will’s words again. “I will kill you if you stay, did you not hear me? I no longer want you, Will.”

The flinch at his words gave Hannibal a hollow satisfaction. “You said you wanted me more than you’ve never wanted anything.”

“And yet I’ve had you and care little to have you again.”

“Liar,” Will said, tears still flowing, “You’re lying. I can feel your cock. I know you do.”

Hannibal’s body was betraying him being so close to Will again. “My body might want you, Will, but I do not.”

“Liar,” Will hissed, grinding against him, “You do.”

“Will...”

“You’ve been desperate to knot me since the moment you saw me in those videos online, haven’t you?” Will purred, “Thinking about my warm tight hole just seeping for you. All alone in that cell, just jerking off to the thought of it.”

Hannibal growled and pressed him against the fence. “Are you that eager to whore yourself out to me again, Will? Do you think I will keep you alive if I can get my cock wet?”

Tears fell down Will’s face. “Don’t you want to?” he whispered.

He inhaled the scent of Will’s slick in the air. “Is this another game?”

“No,” Will said, shaking his head, tears falling down his face, “But you won’t believe me, Alpha, so if you want to tell yourself it is...then go for it.”

“I told you not to...”

He ground himself against Hannibal’s hardness again and Hannibal groaned. “Alpha, Alpha, Alpha,” Will whispered, “Fuck me, Alpha. Make me see the mistake I made.”

Hannibal kissed him hard, bruising, and bit at his mouth as he felt Will shudder. He let go of his wrists and lifted Will up, moving them down to the grass, and tore at Will's pants with ease. The first thrust was hard, making Will tense, and he kept on kissing him to drown out the pleased sounds that would make this more than a means to an end.

He'd wanted this for so very long and now it seemed entirely tainted.

Will clutched at his back, pulling him closer, and he felt the omega's round belly hit his own as he thrust harder. They broke for breath and Will still held him close, whimpering as he hit his prostate again and again.

"Please," Will gasped, "Knot me, Alpha. Knot me, knot me, knot---"

Hannibal felt his knot begin to form as he stroked Will's cock, unable to stop himself as he watched him go wild with pleasure. "Hannibal...oh god...yes...oh fuck..."

He kissed Will again as his knot locked, still thrusting, and when Will came his inner alpha fought him with how much he wanted to bite Will's gland. He bit Will's tongue instead, making him groan. They lay there, uncomfortably together, and Hannibal eased them to the side. Will let out a shaky breath when they parted mouths, still staring at him.

"This changes nothing."

Will flinched. "I know."

"You...need to leave."

"I'm not going anywhere."

“Will...”

Will reached up for him and he grabbed his wrist again. “No. You got me to beg for your knot, just like you said I would.”

“Don’t,” he hissed.

“I’d beg now for you to forgive me but I know that won’t work.”

Hannibal turned away.

“No.”

They lay there in silence for what felt like an eternity. Will was half dressed and Hannibal still completely naked. He felt like a chasm had formed between them even larger than the one that had been there at the start.

“At least you got to fuck me before you killed me.”

He said nothing.

“I’ve only ever had three other alphas knot me,” Will continued, making his lip curl, “And yet I don’t think I’ve ever come so hard as I did with you. Or felt so...”

“Trapped?” Hannibal finished, feeling his knot begin to go down.

“Alive,” Will whispered, “But that won’t be for long I guess.”

He eased out of Will's hole with difficulty, desperately wanting to stay, and was ready to get away when suddenly Will pushed him down onto the grass. "Will, what are you doing?"

"Staying alive," Will whispered, just before he bit into Hannibal's mating gland.

Hannibal shuddered, his whole body feeling the bite, and found he couldn't push him away. He felt tears fill his eyes again.

Of course.

Will finally had decided the only way to stay alive was to mate with him.

He bit his own tongue to keep himself from reciprocating, and as the half bond began to form he closed his eyes doing everything he could to prevent it. The walls he put up against the connection were unstable, but enough for now, and when he opened his eyes again Will was glaring at him.

"What are you gonna do now?"

"Wait," he said, "This half bond will fade and when it does..."

Will didn't move. "It won't."

"You seem so sure."

He smiled. "I want to bond with you more than I've ever wanted anything right now so I know it won't. You'll see."

Hannibal gently eased Will off of him, and began to walk to the house. He felt the bond bite on his neck throb with each move he made.

He didn't once look back at Will but felt him every step of the way.

Chapter 21

The morning after Will felt hollow.

His whole body ached for Hannibal, almost unbearably, and the wall he put up between the half bond was the worst thing an alpha could do to an omega.

Will needed him, and he knew it.

“So you’re just going to punish your daughter by cutting me off?”

Hannibal hadn’t looked at Will for almost twelve hours by the time he spoke, nor did he look at him then.

“Using Abigail against me is a desperate ploy even for you.”

“You used her against me for weeks! Why is me bringing up our baby any different from when you did?”

“Your due date is growing near, Will. A few weeks alone as the bond fades won’t hurt the baby. Eat your breakfast. The baby needs it.”

They still ate together but now their meals were in the dining room.

Will was sure Hannibal brought the food there to have distance between them, but the enclosed space only made it that much easier for him to smell his alpha.

“You’re in as much distress as I am.”

“You’re walking, and can speak. You are not in distress.”

Will slammed his hands on the table. “YOU CAN SMELL ME! You know I...”

Hannibal glared at him across the table before he got up and came to sit beside him. He grabbed Will’s hand and squeezed a bit too hard. “Better?”

The feeling of his alpha did calm Will down a bit, but it wasn’t nearly enough. “No.”

“If this is another ploy....”

Will reached for Hannibal’s collar and pulled. The mating mark he’d left there made Will feel a million times better than the touch had. He let out a long breath and relaxed. “Now *that* made me feel better.”

Hannibal pulled up his collar and looked away. “That makes one of us.”

The rejection made Will hold back a whimper, biting his lip as he watched his alpha eat. He felt Abby kick at him and he rubbed his belly wincing. Hannibal looked up then and stared at his hand as if waiting for Will to pretend he was in major pain.

“What?”

“Nothing.”

The rest of breakfast was in relative silence, though Will couldn’t stop staring at Hannibal or remembering the night before. He’d never felt anything remotely close to that when he’d had sex with anyone else. Not ever.

He'd been so stupid.

This was where he belonged, he knew that now, and possibly he'd ruined the chance to be happy forever.

Hannibal finished his breakfast and left the house without even saying goodbye. Princess came in after and sat on the fancy chair he'd vacated. Will fed her some bacon and tried not to cry. He went outside after Hannibal was gone, the fear nonexistent now, and dipped his feet into the pool.

He couldn't see the view sitting so low but the sky still looked nice.

Will looked around the yard and noticed the spot where Hannibal had knotted him just last night. He stopped, stared, and felt slick leak out as he remembered. The sex hadn't been like earlier, playful or even happy, but still he remembered the feeling of Hannibal inside him. He clung to the feeling, remembering the bite after, and was so lost in thought that by the time he looked up the sun was going down.

When was the last time he'd eaten? Breakfast? Had he even eaten lunch? He couldn't remember.

He got up slowly, body aching, and went inside to see Hannibal still not back. There was fresh fruit in the fridge and milk that he ate without much thrill before falling asleep again on the couch.

Will woke to the smell of meat cooking, and lifted his head to find a pillow underneath. He smiled, sat up, and saw Hannibal cooking through the open kitchen. His alpha moved around the kitchen with grace, almost like a dance, and when he paused to look at Will he blushed just a bit.

"You're awake."

“Yes.”

“It’s not good for the baby to keep sleeping on the couch.”

“I know.”

Will didn’t move.

“The strawberries and grapes are gone.”

“I ate them.”

“Hmm.”

Hannibal went back to cooking and Will laid his head on the back of the couch still watching him. He still ached, but pushed all the feelings he had for Hannibal toward their bond hoping the alpha felt something.

There was no sign that Hannibal felt anything at all.

Will laid down again, feeling even more tired, and when he woke it was to the smell of something wonderful.

Hannibal had left his meal on the coffee table, covered in order to stay warm, and when he got up he saw the alpha was sitting in the armchair across the room.

“Where did you go today?”

“The market and some other places of little importance.”

Will ate what looked like chicken but honestly could be anything. He was starved, almost ravenous, and when he finished he still wanted more but didn't ask.

“Kill anyone?”

Hannibal didn't answer at first.

“No.”

“Hmmm,” he sighed, leaning back and putting his feet under him, “Still feeling like that ache is satisfied?”

Hannibal didn't answer and Will just smiled, stretching out his neck. He'd known quite a few omegas in high school who used to do that in the hallways to attract attention from alphas.

‘All alphas want to do is bite your gland.’

Will felt Hannibal's eyes on him as he moved and turned to look at him again.

“Still thinking of waiting till the bond fades?”

Hannibal looked down at the sketchbook in his hands. “Yes.”

“Hmm.”

Will spent the rest of the night there on the couch, getting up a few times to go to the bathroom, but he felt better still the closer he was to Hannibal. He fell asleep on the couch again and woke up the next morning still there with no blanket.

Hannibal hadn't even thought to cover him.

The ache in his body suddenly got worse and Abby kicked him hard. Will winced, rubbing his belly. He didn't smell breakfast, or Hannibal at all, and walked up the stairs to find Hannibal's door closed.

Will's hands shook as he fought the urge to open the door.

He pushed at the bond, biting down on his lip when he felt nothing in return.

His alpha was inside.

But he didn't want Will.

Will turned away and dragged his feet across the hallway to his bedroom. He could smell Hannibal's scent very faintly and he rushed to find the tie Hannibal had given him what felt like so long ago. Will's eyes filled with tears as he breathed in the faint trace of his alpha.

"Alpha..."

He felt tears fall down his face as his body ached at the loss.

How much longer until the bond faded?

And when it finally did, how long until Hannibal killed him?

Will felt Abby kick at him again.

“I’m so sorry,” he whispered, squeezing his eyes tight, “So, so sorry.”

She kept on kicking him, and Will ran his hand across his belly.

These might be some of the last moments he had with her.

He wanted to feel every single one.

Chapter 22

Days going by didn't lessen the ache that had begun to form in Hannibal.

His alphan instincts clawed at the wall he'd formed against the half bond, and despite everything the feelings he had for Will did not fade. They only seemed to bloom now that he'd felt the closeness he'd craved for so long.

Which made him want to fulfill the ache in other ways.

His anger, still deep, centered on one way in particular and on person.

Will.

But still he found himself unable to stay away. They shared breakfast, lunch, and dinner together, often in near complete silence, but every moment felt like sheer hell.

Like now.

Will sat two chairs down from him eating his meal, his pale countenance hurting more than it should, and as always watched him with every bite.

"I know why you're doing this to me," Will whispered, his voice shaking, "But to do it to yourself i just..."

Hannibal did not give him the satisfaction of a response.

Nearly a week now had passed since Will had bitten him and in time the bond would fade.

It had to fade.

He did not think he could take this much longer if it did not.

Hannibal finished his meal, tasting nothing, and stood up from the table. He walked right behind Will and winced when his hand was grabbed.

“Look at me.”

“No.”

“If you’d just....feel me,” Will whimpered, “You’d know it wasn’t...it was real. I...”

He wrenched his hand from Will’s grasp and rushed from the dining room, blinking back tears as the ache throbbed again.

This house felt like a tomb.

Hannibal tossed his plate in the sink, hardly caring, and rushed for some fresh air.

The patio did little to end his distress, and he found it difficult to breathe.

How much longer could he take this?

“If something happens to the baby because you’re being a stubborn asshole, I’ll never forgive you.”

He froze.

“She didn’t do this to you,” Will whined, “Alpha...”

Hannibal turned abruptly and glared at him. “I told you not to use that word again.”

Will’s face was covered in tears. “Alpha, Alpha, ALPHA!” he hissed, “What are you gonna do, *Alpha* ? Hurt me? You’re hurting me EVERY SINGLE DAY! You brought me here to make us a family and...made me fall in love with you only to...”

He growled, rushing toward Will and stopping at the smell of his fear.

“Will...”

Will did not move though the scent of his fear only intensified.

“Are you gonna kill us both, Alpha?” Will whispered, tears falling down his face, “Will that make you feel better? To lose every single person that ever loved you?”

Hannibal growled. “Do NOT try to manipulate me now! Not now, not after--!”

Will grabbed his hands. “I LOVE YOU, HANNIBAL! You got what you wanted and now you’re just refusing to...”

He yanked his hands away, snarling, and shook with a sudden need to attack the one giving him such pain. “No, you...no...you’re attempting to...no. NO!”

Hannibal shook his head and backed away.

“Hannibal... *please* .”

He suddenly felt there was only one thing he could do.

Run.

Hannibal heard Will yell as he made his way to the garage, shaking, and when he got into the car the remote start came to life. Tears fell as he drove toward the gate, and he heard Will hit the back of the car just before he took off.

He couldn't take this anymore.

“Call Chiyoh,” he said, knowing the car would hear.

Her voice came almost instantly as he drove, and Hannibal found it hard to speak.

“Hannibal?”

“I...”

“What's happened?”

“I need a place,” he said, his voice thick, “I need...I have to get away from Will.”

She was quiet. “I will find a place and call you with an address within the hour.”

The call ended and Hannibal ignored the ache that seemed to only worsen the further he got away from the house.

He had to run.

Running was the only thing he could do.

Chapter 23

Will's pain only grew after the first day passed without his alpha.

Abigail was still strong, kicking and moving in him, but he found it difficult to even muster the energy to feed the dog let alone himself.

He resisted the urge to move into Hannibal's bed but started to take pieces of his clothes, drowning in the scent, and started to swim to pass the time. The water was a good distraction, though his growing weakness made even that hard to do for long, and every night he went to bed in an empty house he wondered if Hannibal had left him here to die.

But he didn't touch a single phone, or call for help, because what if Hannibal returned?

This could all be some strange test for him, trying to see if Will really meant what he'd said. If he left and Hannibal came back he'd think it was all a lie.

And it wasn't.

Not at all.

And as the second day came Will told himself Hannibal had to be feeling the same pain he was.

Mated pairs weren't meant to be apart, or even half bonded ones.

Hannibal wouldn't leave him like this.

Day three only made Will's thought that this was a test intensify when he woke to see a silver car parked just inside the gate. He found an envelope with a key fob inside and a hastily written note.

You know the code.

Will shook his head.

No, Hannibal was only trying to test him.

He'd be back soon.

He had to be.

If Will just held on for a little bit longer he'd come back.

So Will tried to comfort himself with more things that smelled of him, and watched dog shows on TV while he ate every labeled piece of meat he found in the fridge. He got tired more easily by day four, and left food out for the dog all day now, but Princess seemed fine.

He let her out whenever she wanted, and she was always there to wake him if he slept too long.

She was a good girl.

Abby still kicked him, though he wasn't as hungry as he should have been, and by the end of day four he stopped resisting the urge to move into Hannibal's bedroom. That change alone made things better.

“Alpha...”

The pain was a dull ache now, and Will felt weak but he was holding on.

He had to hold on.

Hannibal would come home soon.

Right?

Chapter 24

The ache in his chest worsened as the days went by, though Hannibal chose to ignore it.

Chiyoh had gotten him a small home many miles away from the villa, remote enough to be discreet and nice enough that he did not feel as if he were living in a hovel.

She said nothing when she let himself inside, eyeing him critically but saying nothing, and as the days went by she brought him supplies with that same air of disapproval.

“It has been two days.”

“Yes.”

“What are your plans?”

Hannibal had no plans, other than waiting this out, and he could tell she expected more of him.

“He’ll be gone before I return.”

“Yes,” she said, her eyes narrowing, “I suppose that’s true one way or another.”

Hannibal sat down at the small table with difficulty, hands shaking, and ate slowly to keep the aches from worsening. “I’m not sure what you mean.”

“He’ll be gone,” she said, “In one way or another. Omegas need their alphas and yours is without one.”

“He is not mine.”

Chiyoh scoffed. “Is that what you’re going to tell yourself when all is said and done?”

Hannibal glared at her. “Is there anything else?”

She shook her head. “No.”

He did not see her for two more days, though he had enough food for three, and when she pulled up that evening he froze the minute she got close.

“Stop.”

Will’s scent was faint but he could smell it as if the omega was standing right before him.

“You know where I’ve been.”

Hannibal backed away from her. “Do not come any closer.”

“He’s in pain,” she said, sneering at him, “The man who intrigued you so that you escaped from prison and took him for your own.”

Hannibal backed away. “The bond...”

“It *refuses* to fade,” she said, sounding distressed, “He did not even realize I came to him, nor did he feel my hand on him. He’s barely eating, Hannibal, your omega. He waits for you in pain all alone, dying because you refuse to believe---”

His eyes filled with tears as he turned away from her. “STOP!”

He could hear her footsteps echoing as he rushed through the house.

“THEY WILL DIE AND YOU WILL NEVER FORGIVE YOURSELF!”

Hannibal fell to his knees, covering his face with both hands, and shaking as the words echoed through him.

His whole body ached from being away from Will.

Will’s pain had to be much worse than his own.

Why was the bond not fading?

“Go home,” she said, “Hannibal---”

He looked up at her. “He doesn’t want me,” he said, his teeth clenched, “The mating bite was only for him to keep his life. If I go back there and complete the bond I’ll feel his contempt every day for the rest of my life.”

Chiyoh crouched down to whisper in his ear. “But you *will* feel him. Is that not enough?”

Hannibal closed his eyes. “He may never forgive me.”

“You cannot starve out love,” she sighed, standing up again, “Though you can starve an omega to death by lack of your presence, especially a pregnant one. It takes time, yes, but

you can. Your omega does not have much more time left.”

He felt the wall he’d put between the half bond start to crumble as he spoke.

“The half bond,” he said, “I put a wall between us. If I remove it...”

She hissed. “LET THE WALL DOWN NOW! FEEL HIM!”

Hannibal let the wall fall and groaned, falling forward. He expected to feel a flood of Will come to him but gasped when he felt hardly anything.

“It’s...silent.”

Chiyoh glared down at him. “We may already be too late.”

He pushed back on the bond, hoping to feel Will’s reaction, and let out a sob when something pushed in return. “He’s alive, I can feel him,” he whispered, his voice shaking as he looked at her, “Please, I’m...unsure if I can drive.”

“That is why I came.”

Hannibal’s vision blurred. “Please,” he whispered, “Take me home.”

Chiyoh nodded, and let him lean on her as they walked out the front door of the house. Hannibal found himself shaking the closer he was to Will’s scent on her, and resisted the urge to press his face in the remnants left behind hours before. He moaned as she got him inside, barely able to fasten his safety belt, and when they finally pulled away from the house he felt immensely lighter.

His alphan instincts were now tearing at his insides, yes, but they were also very excited at the prospect of seeing Will.

Will.

The cowardly retreat he'd made after Will's declaration would forever be unforgivable, he knew, but Hannibal would still cement their bond the moment he got to Will again.

Will was his.

He'd denied this to himself for far too long now, and even if Will never forgave him for his actions he would spend the rest of their lives trying to make it up to him.

“Chiyoh...if...I...if Will...”

“Don't think such things,” she hissed, “It will only make your own instincts react and the half bond is very strong. Stronger than most if you can both feel each other so far apart. True mates are rare Hannibal. You know this.”

Hannibal looked out the window as they drove.

“Promise me you'll do what's necessary if it comes time.”

She gripped the steering wheel and he watched her lip quiver. “I will not lose another Lecter.”

“Chiyoh...”

“I should not have let you stay away this long,” she sighed, “Your stubbornness outweighed your sense and my duty made me reckless with your family’s lives.”

“I made this choice, not you,” he said, blinking back tears, “Do not let yourself think otherwise.”

Hannibal felt a flutter of Will touch him again and whimpered, trying with all his strength to pull the bond tighter. His own denial was what now made him unable to communicate as he should have been able. He sighed.

“He still touches your bond?”

“Yes,” he smiled, closing his eyes, “He’s weak but...there.”

“Can you feel the child?”

He blinked his eyes open. “I...is that possible?”

“You’re her father,” she said, “Familial bonds are rare but Will bonded himself to you even if you did not reciprocate. You can attempt it.”

Hannibal closed his eyes again and tried to feel Abigail in Will’s half of the bond. The weakness in Will made things much more difficult and he bit his lip hard as he concentrated.

“I...”

“You’re her alpha, Hannibal. Be her alpha.”

“*Mažasis.*”

A flutter came back at him and Hannibal smiled. “She’s alive.”

“Keep pushing back at them, Hannibal. Do not stop.”

He didn’t.

The ache in him lessened the longer they drove, and he could feel Will more the longer he pushed back at the half bond. They could not communicate, not really, but the weak signals he’d had before grew stronger as the hours went by and when they pulled into the gate Hannibal could no longer wait to see Will again.

He stumbled out of the car, shaken but steadier now, and threw open the door. The thick, heavy scent of omegan distress hit him like a slap in the face the moment he was inside and he ran up the stairs as Princess barked excited by his arrival.

Hannibal followed the distressed scent to his own bedroom where he found Will pale and lifeless in his bed. He gathered Will in his arms as tears fell down his face, and peeled back the collar of Will’s shirt to see his inflamed mating gland.

“Please,” he whispered, “Please, Will,” just as he bit down hard.

He felt Will convulse in his arms and suckled at the bite while their bond locked flooding through them.

“Alpha,” Will moaned, clutching at his neck, “You came back.”

Hannibal felt his tears flow as he licked at the bite and kissed up to Will’s mouth tasting him for the first time since that awful night that felt like a lifetime ago. Will moaned, biting his tongue, and the aches that had haunted them for nearly a week began to disappear.

“Alpha...”

They needed to feel more, be more, so Hannibal pulled his shirt up and off while Will did the same.

“Mine.”

“Yesss,” Will purred, “Yes.”

He was lost in the haze, barely able to think, and he pulled down Will’s pants to lap at the wetness running down his legs.

“Oh god...”

Will was his now, all his, and he freed his cock to thrust into him hard. Will clutched at him tightly. “Alpha...”

“Mine,” he growled, “All mine.”

“Yesss,” Will sighed, “Yours. I’m all...”

He fucked him slowly, never looking away, and he could feel every ounce of pleasure he gave Will come right back at him. “Will..”

“More,” Will moaned, “Don’t stop. Hannibal, don’t...”

Hannibal kissed him, biting as he thrust in again and taking Will’s cock in hand.

This was what their first time had been meant to feel like.

A coming together.

A union.

He felt Will shudder and purr beneath him. “Don’t stop, don’t...”

“I’m sorry,” he whispered, burying his face in Will’s neck to drown in his scent, “Will, I love you...I...”

“I know,” Will moaned, “I...know...oh god...don’t...”

All of a sudden a wetness came from Will that seemed to spill across the bed.

Will gasped. “Oh no, no no.”

Hannibal pulled out and stared at the wetness. “Your water broke.”

“It’s too early,” Will whimpered, “It’s too early, Hannibal. It’s too...”

He lifted Will up off the bed and began to carry him down the stairs. “Shh..”

“It’s too early,” Will repeated, his voice shaking, “It’s...”

“I have everything we need, Will. I promise. Everything will be ok.”

Will stared up at him. “Promise?”

“I promise.”

He felt Will relax in his arms as he lay him down taking off everything below the waist.

“Everything will be ok?”

“Yes.”

Hannibal let out a long breath and tried to calm.

Everything would be ok.

It had to be.

Chapter 25

“Alpha...please I don’t...”

Will could barely see through his tears as Hannibal stared back from between his legs. “Breathe for me, Mylimasis,” he said, the tone soothing as he pushed back all his love at Will, “Take two deep breaths and push.”

He pushed, groaning at the pain. “It hurts...”

“Will,” Hannibal said, “You can do this. You’re so strong, Will. So strong. You can do this.”

He felt Chiyoh wipe at his forehead and grabbed her hand. “I can’t...”

“You can,” she said, “You can.”

He pushed once more and suddenly a cry echoed around them. Will fell back on the pillow under his head, shaking as he looked at Hannibal again. His smile made Will’s tears fall faster.

“She’s here, Will,” he whispered, voice thick, “Abigail is here.”

Will let out a sob and dropped Chiyoh’s hand as Hannibal came toward him with their baby girl wrapped in a blanket. Abigail’s brown curls seemed to shine as Hannibal put her in his arms and he kissed Will’s forehead. “Hello,” Will whispered, touching her face, “I’m your Dad.”

She cried, wiggling, and Will laughed.

Hannibal scented his cheek. “And I am your....”

“Daddy,” Will finished, smiling at him, “This is your Daddy.”

They shared a look and Chiyoh moved to leave but Will grabbed her arm. “Thank you,” he whispered, “I...I couldn’t have done it without you.”

Chiyoh shook her head. “You don’t give yourself enough credit. Not many omegas could’ve held on as long as you did without their alphas.”

He felt Hannibal tense beside him and looked at Abigail again. “I knew I had to,” he sighed, “For her.”

“She’s strong as well, and lived up to her family name. Lecters are known for their strength.”

Will laughed. “Among other things.”

Hannibal reached out to touch Abigail’s cheek. “She looks like you.”

“A little,” he sighed, feeling tired, as he moved Abigail to his breast, “But she has your eyes.”

Hannibal kissed his cheek. “If you need to rest...”

“No, no,” Will mumbled, wincing as she started to suckle, “I...I’m fine.”

The days alone had felt so long without Hannibal and Abigail was the only reason he kept going. He couldn’t even think of letting her out of his sight, not even to sleep.

“May I get a seat and sit beside you?”

He nodded.

“I will get one for you,” Chiyoh said, disappearing out of sight.

“Chiyoh’s...nicer than I thought she was.”

“She likes you,” Hannibal said, leaning in to nuzzle his cheek again, “She brought me home. I...was letting my stubbornness keep me away.”

Will frowned. “So you were just gonna let us wither away here?”

“I...”

Chiyoh returned with a chair. “Is there anything else? Will, do you need some water?”

“Please. But...Hannibal can get it.”

Hannibal frowned, nodded, and left Will alone with Chiyoh.

“She’s beautiful.”

“Thank you,” he whispered, “Thank you for a lot of things.”

“He would have come to his senses on his own,” she said, “I assure you.”

“But if he hadn’t?” Will asked, tears filling his eyes.

“He instructed me to do what needed to be done.”

He looked at her. “Thank you.”

Chiyoh nodded. “You’re welcome.”

Hannibal returned with a cup of water that had a straw in it. He took a small sip and handed it back.

“Is there anything else I can do?”

“No, but...don’t go,” Will said, “I’d like you to stay.”

“Of course.”

Chiyoh left them alone again, the silence oddly thick, and Hannibal sat there for what felt like forever as Abigail fed from Will. When she finished Hannibal patted her on the back and Will’s heart ached watching him make her burp.

“There now,” he said, smiling down at her, “I’m sure you were very hungry. Weren’t you, Mažasis?”

“Just like her Daddy,” Will said, his eyes drooping.

Hannibal smiled at him and put Abigail in the crook of his arm. Will let out a whine and Hannibal looked up. "Will?"

"Seeing you with her," he said, blinking back tears, "This time a few months ago I would never have...wanted it and now...god now..."

Hannibal kissed him softly. "I love you, Will."

"I love you, Hannibal."

He pressed his forehead to Will's. "I will spend the rest of my life making up for the mistakes I've made."

"I know," Will said, touching his cheek, "But if you ever think of leaving us again? I'll hunt you down and kill you myself."

Hannibal smiled. "I would let you."

Abigail fell asleep not long after her meal and Hannibal put her in a waiting bassinet on Will's other side. Will fought to stay awake but succumbed to sleep not long after.

Will woke to Abigail crying again, and found Hannibal asleep in the chair beside him. He sighed, reached into the bassinet. He put her to his breast and she began to suckle in the dim light.

"Just like your Daddy," he whispered, "So hungry."

"Will?"

He smiled at Hannibal. “We’re ok. You can go upstairs.”

“I will not leave you again.”

Will reached out and Hannibal took his offered hand. “You should’ve put two beds in here.”

“I’ve slept in worse conditions.”

He frowned. “Hannibal…”

Hannibal moved his chair closer to Will and watched Abigail feed from him. He ran his hand through her curls. “Familial bonds are rare,” he whispered, “But when we were coming back I could feel her call out to me.”

He reached out for Abigail and there was a warmth echoed back at him. “I feel her,” he whispered, “I felt her the whole time every night kicking me but I didn’t realize…”

“We’re true mates, Will,” Hannibal whispered, “And she is our offspring. Children of true mated pairs are just as rare as the true mate experience itself. Our family bond will only grow.”

Will laughed. “She’s gonna hate us being able to spy on her.”

“Perhaps,” Hannibal said, wrapping his arm around Will’s back, “But… it’ll be there all the same.”

He felt his eyelids start to lower and fought to stay awake. “Alpha…”

“Sleep, Will. We’re not going anywhere.”

Will smiled and closed his eyes. “I know.”

Chapter 26

Chapter Notes

WARNING FOR BOTTOM HANNIBAL SINCE IT SEEMS TO UPSET A LOT OF PEOPLE.

Hannibal heard the gate alarm as he was just finishing breakfast.

Chiyoh was early yet again.

The last few weeks had felt like a dream he never wanted to wake up from. The bond he shared with Will had only continued to grow stronger despite his mistake and them being prohibited from sexual intercourse. Abigail grew bigger everyday, and looked more and more like her omega father.

Hannibal had never been happier.

But there were moments when the guilt that brought them here would resurface and he needed to do something to make it up to Will. So he'd called in Chiyoh once more.

She'd assured him it wouldn't be a difficult task, not at all, and as he went to the door to let her inside his excitement grew.

"Is she here already?" Will sighed from the couch, breastfeeding their daughter, "You said we had an hour."

"It's fine, Will."

He frowned and turned away. "If I'd known she was on her way I would've done this an *hour* ago."

Hannibal kissed his cheek. "Don't worry."

Chiyoh knocked a second later and he felt Will's annoyance all the way to the door.

"Hello Chiyoh."

She smiled at him and her gaze lingered on Hannibal's mating bite. "You seem to have gorged yourself on love."

Hannibal smiled. "Yes. I'm positively gluttonous."

"Good," she said, "Otherwise the trouble I just went through was not with it."

"Are they inside?"

She smiled. "Yes."

"Will?" Hannibal asked, looking back at him.

"What?" Will mumbled, not turning around.

"Could you come here, please?"

"I'm in the middle of something."

“Just for a moment.”

“Hannibal...”

Chiyoh sighed. “I’ll get them.”

“Wait!”

She ignored him and opened the door to her rather large truck.

The barks of seven dogs that ran out startled Will out of feeding Abigail and he turned frozen with her on his shoulder as several of the dogs came inside while others wandered the patio. Hannibal stood in the doorway and watched Will’s eyes as one dog came up to him excitedly.

“Winston?”

Chiyoh came into the house as Hannibal headed toward Will, who was now stuck holding Abigail and trying to calm down the excited dogs. “Buster? Harley? Zoe?”

Abigail cried out and the dogs all seemed to settle when Will whistled, letting out a strangled sob as he looked at Hannibal. “You...”

Hannibal smiled and took Abigail from him. “I thought our family needed to be a bit bigger.”

Will threw himself at Hannibal and he heard him whisper to Chiyoh.

“Thank you so much.”

“It was...difficult...but you’re welcome.”

Hannibal watched Will excitedly introduce Princess to his pack, and take them outside where he saw two of the other dogs who were just as thrilled to see him. He patted Abigail’s back and she spit up a bit on his shoulder but released her soft burp as intended. “You have taken quite well to being a father and a mate.”

“Surely that’s what you expected,” he said, following Will outside and never taking his eyes off him, “When you brought me home.”

“You’re protective of your family,” she said, “But I was unsure if you would feel trapped by the depth of your feelings.”

“Never,” Hannibal said, looking at her again, “They’re *everything* .”

They sat down at the table outside to watch Will throw one of Princess’s balls to the dogs. Hannibal remembered the night he’d last seen these dogs and the fear in Will’s eyes. He never wanted to make him feel that way again.

“No one saw you?” Hannibal asked, unable to look away.

“Of course not,” she scoffed, “There were several new owners but most will not miss them.”

“Are they microchipped?”

“Already changed, though no address of course and your alias.”

“Thank you,” he whispered, looking at her as one of the dogs, Winston, sniffed at his leg, “You’ve been...very good to me since this all began.”

“I didn’t think it would end this way,” she said softly, “I fully expected him to kill you after that first night.”

Hannibal suddenly put Abigail in the crook of his arm and began to rock her. She wore a bright pink dress with a headband that Will had called ‘obnoxious.’ Hannibal had already taken many pictures.

“As did I,” he admitted, smiling, “But...here we are.”

Chiyoh held out her hands. “May I?”

He blinked. “You wish to hold Abigail?”

“Is that not allowed by your mate? Do you need his permission?”

Hannibal looked out at Will, still running with the dogs, and frowned. “I’m unsure.”

“He’s tamed you.”

He looked at her and smiled. “I suppose.”

“It doesn’t frighten you? To give yourself up so freely?”

His gaze moved to Will again and there must have been something in their bond that made Will look at him. “No, not at all.”

“Hmm.”

Will came over to them, cheeks flushed, and smiled. “They must’ve been a handful on the car ride.”

“Yes, but...as I’ve said they are good dogs.”

“Thanks again,” he said, smiling, “It’s...good to have them back.”

“You’re quite welcome,” she said, turning to look at Hannibal, “Your mate seems to need your permission to allow me to hold the baby. May I?”

Will frowned. “You want to hold Abigail?”

“What makes you both think I would not wish to hold your child?”

“No, I just,” Will started, shaking his head, “It’s fine. I’m just...surprised.”

“I was here for her birth and she is now under my protection. Of course I want to hold her.”

Hannibal frowned. “I suppose then, if Will approves...”

He handed Abigail over to Chiyoh who smiled down at her. “She looks even more like Will since the last time I saw her.”

“Yes,” Hannibal said, smiling at Will, “She does.”

Will held out his hand. "Come on."

Hannibal frowned and looked back once more at Abigail who was wide awake. She seemed perfectly fine to be in Chiyoh's arms. "Perhaps..."

"Nope, I want to show you somethin'," Will said, pulling him out of his chair.

"Will..."

The dogs all seemed preoccupied as Will took him toward the door and pulled him inside. He shut the door behind them. "Will, what's..."

He smashed their mouths together hard and Hannibal moaned, clutching at his back. The smell of Will's slick suddenly peaked and he growled. "Will..."

"You...I can't believe you...you brought them back."

"Of course, I...I know you've missed them and..."

Will undid his belt. "I love you so much," he whispered, freeing his cock, "You're so good to me, Alpha. Fuck, you're so..."

The first touch of Will's tongue to his cock made Hannibal groan, clutching at his hair, "Will..."

Will stroked as he licked, purring, and Hannibal gave into the sensation.

"Mylimasis, you...you undo me."

He looked down at him as Will looked up, mouth full of his hardness, and the sight made his knot already begin to form. Will pulled his mouth off, stood up, and smiled. “Where do you want me, Alpha?”

“We haven’t much time, Will. Chiyoh is not proficient in childcare techniques and Abigail may need us very soon. I’m not certain we should indulge.”

Will grabbed the front of his shirt hard. “We’d feel any problem with the baby in our bond, you know that. If she needs us, we’ll know. You’re not gonna reject me, are you Alpha?”

“Mylimasis...”

He peeled off his shirt and let it fall to the ground. Hannibal had to concentrate not to knot at the sight of his swollen nipples, so full of milk, and the memory of the last time he’d been with Will made him growl.

“Catch me if you can.”

Will took off running and Hannibal was suddenly unable to do anything else but follow. He trapped Will on the stairs, kissing him again, and Will shivered as he stuck both his hands down the back of Will’s pants.

“You’re so wet for me.”

“Hannibal...”

“It’s been too long,” he whispered, kissing his mating bite, “Hasn’t it?”

“Yess...we didn’t get to finish.”

“No,” he purred, sticking his finger into Will’s wet waiting hole, “We did not.”

“Alpha...please.”

“Run,” Hannibal growled, pressing in again, “And I’ll catch you.”

Will took off running but not to their bedroom.

No.

He went into the room he’d long since vacated and shut the door.

Hannibal smiled and stalked across to the door, opening it slowly to find Will lying half naked on his old bed. He was holding a pair of handcuffs.

Hannibal growled. “Will...”

“I used to sit here at night jerking off to your ties and silk underwear,” Will purred as he shut the door, “Desperate for your knot and hating myself. There were times when I pretended the handcuffs were your hands tight around my wrists.”

Hannibal pulled down his pants, his whole body aching, and ripped the buttons from his shirt letting it fall to the floor. “Did you whisper my name when you pleased yourself, Mylimasis?”

“Yes,” Will sighed, “But...there were other times when...I thought about...doing something else.”

His knot was fully formed now, too thick to even be inside Will, but Hannibal cared very little.

“Tell me, Will.”

Will pressed two fingers into his hole and moaned before he pulled them out covered in his slick. “I thought about fucking you, Alpha.”

Hannibal shuddered. “Will...”

“You told me that first night,” he whispered, moving to hold out his hand to Hannibal, “When I said ‘fuck you’ that you wouldn’t say no to me being inside you. Did you mean it?”

“Yes.”

“Get on the bed, Alpha.”

Hannibal laid down as Will got off the bed, watching him, and let Will cuff his hands to the bed. He felt nothing but need as Will kissed his mating mark, scenting as he went from side to side.

“Will...”

“We don’t have long,” Will whispered, touching his face as he held out his hand again, “But I don’t think we’ll need much time.”

Hannibal licked Will’s finger and moaned. “Will, I need...”

Will smiled before he touched his hole again and he pressed kisses to Hannibal’s thighs. “I know what you need.”

The first touch of Will's fingers inside him made Hannibal moan, arching up to every touch, and as he began to stretch him with more Hannibal found himself lost in the pleasure. This would not be the first time he'd been penetrated but it would be the first an omega did the deed.

"No omega has ever done this to me before."

Will licked his lips. "Are you just telling me that to make me feel important?"

"No," he sighed, "I'd never lie to you, Will. Not again."

He pressed in a third finger and Hannibal gasped. "Ahhh...there it is."

"Will..."

"Open your legs for me."

Hannibal did just that, lost in Will's instruction, and as he watched Will touch himself again he rattled the cuffs that made him unable to move.

"I need you, Will. I can't wait much longer, I need..."

Will began to stroke himself, covered in slick, and Hannibal's knot was so close to spilling he could hardly speak. "Are you ready?"

He nodded once and at the first thrust of Will's cock inside him Hannibal came. He spilled against Will's chest as Will kissed him hard, digging his nails into Hannibal's back, and the fullness inside made him groan with pleasure when they parted.

“Will...don’t stop...I...”

Will bite at his mating mark, cheeks flushed as he continued, and fucked him hard and fast.

“So tight, Alpha,” Will moaned, “God it’s so good, Hannibal....fuck you’re so...”

He felt Will spill inside him as he fell off the edge into pleasure and bit at his mating mark again. Will clutched his neck, groaning, and bit Hannibal’s tongue as he thrust until he collapsed against his chest.

Hannibal panted for breath, nuzzling his cheek, and smiled. “That was...everything I’d hoped it would be.”

Will smiled against his neck, “And you didn’t worry about the baby once.”

He froze. “Abigail! She---”

Will kissed his cheek. “She’s fine.”

“But---”

“Shhh..”

He reached up to undo Hannibal’s restraints one by one and they tumbled onto Will’s old bed still attached. “We need to do that more often.”

“Yeah?”

“Mmm...”

Will kissed his cheek. “I love you.”

“I love you too, Will.”

They lay there, happy in the afterglow, until Will sighed. “Shower before we try to pretend we didn’t just have sex?”

Hannibal smiled. “Sounds good to me.”

The two of them showered fast, still unable to keep their hands to themselves, and before long Hannibal was fucking Will up against the tile wall covering his mouth with one hand. He couldn’t resist knotting, desperate to fill Will completely, and when they finally came out it was well past time for them to have returned downstairs.

Will grabbed his hand and kissed it. “I’m sure she won’t even say anything.”

They walked out and looked down from the railing to see Chiyoh sitting on the couch with Abigail and the dogs. She looked up at them and smiled.

“Finished already?”

Will blushed and let go of his hand before he headed down the stairs. Hannibal followed not far behind and when they both came to her Chiyoh’s smug smirk made Will blush.

“Polite people wouldn’t say anything.”

“Polite hosts wouldn’t be having sex loudly when they have a guest.”

He felt Will suddenly move forward and held him back. “Chiyoh...”

She sighed. “I apologize, Will. Next time I won’t remark on it.”

“Thank you.”

“Are you staying for dinner?” Hannibal asked, taking Abigail from her.

“That depends,” she said, smiling, “Are you going to wait till after dessert to leave me to childcare duty again?”

Will laughed. “Would you say no?”

“Of course not,” she said, smiling, “Abigail was very well behaved and the dogs as well. If you need more time for...bonding...I am more than willing to help.”

“Then you’re more than welcome to stay all night if you want,” Will joked as Hannibal sat between them.

“Will...”

“And as often as you’d like,” Hannibal finished.

She nodded, still amused. “Thank you. Perhaps next time I’ll bring more dogs.”

He watched Will’s face light up. “I can’t tell if you’re joking.”

“She *is* joking,” Hannibal murmured, giving Abigail to Will, “No more dogs. Chiyoh, could we speak outside?”

“Am I to be reprimanded?”

“Hannibal...”

He kissed Will’s cheek. “We will be only a few minutes, Will. Don’t worry.”

Hannibal walked Chiyoh outside, shut the door behind them, and they sat on opposite outdoor chairs.

“Now I *know* you’re happy.”

He smiled. “I will not apologize for anything.”

Chiyoh smiled. ““You never have. I’m happy to see your happiness, Hannibal.”

“Thank you.”

“And Will’s as well. Things ended as they should.”

“Yes,” he whispered, staring out at the view, “I do believe they have.”

“Will you stop?”

The question hung in the air and Hannibal didn't hesitate in his answer. "For now."

"But not forever."

"No."

"I see," she said softly, sighing, "I think that's wise."

"You really wish to stay for dinner?"

Chiyoh smiled. "Are you that worried I will talk your mate into more dogs?"

"Chiyoh, we have plenty of dogs already. Will---"

"They make him happy," she said, standing again, "And you want to keep him that way."

"We're...in a good place at the moment. Will has forgiven me and my guilt..."

"Is stronger than your need for a calm house."

He laughed. "Yes."

"I'll keep my words to myself."

"Thank you. We certainly have enough dogs now, I think."

They headed back into the house and Hannibal paused at the doorway. The first thing he saw was Will dancing with Abigail while the dogs all moved around him. His chest ached at the sight of them.

“Are you certain you have enough?”

Hannibal smiled.

“Perhaps just one more.”

Chapter 27

The last two months had been the best of Will's life.

His daughter grew bigger everyday and his mating bond was stronger than ever.

Will was happy.

Truly happy.

Which was probably why just a few days after Abby turned two months Will woke in the middle of the night drenched in sweat aching in a way he hadn't in years. He rolled onto his back, aching, and reached out for Hannibal.

"Alpha...."

Hannibal stirred but didn't wake.

Will whined and pulled down his pajama pants before pressing two fingers into himself.

"Ha...nnibal..."

He moaned and pushed all the sudden desperate want he felt through their bond. Hannibal reached for him in the dark. "Will?"

"Fuck...fu...oh god..."

Hannibal turned on the light and stared at Will in shock.

“ *Will...* ”

“Fuck me,” Will whimpered, “Fuck.. *fuck me, fuck me, fuck ...*”

He didn’t stop begging until Hannibal was inside him, digging his nails into Hannibal’s back as he thrust in deeper.

“Will...we need...”

“Harder,” Will moaned, “Harder, harder, hard...”

Hannibal gave Will just what he asked for, thrusting hard and fast until his knot filled quickly spilling inside him. He bit at Will’s mating bite, growling, and kept on plunging in hard.

“Mine...”

“Alpha...”

He pulled at the bond, needing more, and Hannibal pushed back through their link every once of pleasure he could give him. Will came with a whimper, biting down, and while Hannibal’s knot spilled he finally felt right again.

Hannibal licked at the bite he’d left and Will whimpered.

“I thought...we had more time.”

“It’s been long enough already,” Hannibal sighed, shaking, “I was beginning to suspect you had passed heats by but...”

“I guess I’m still ripe,” Will whispered, scenting Hannibal’s cheek.

“We need to call Chiyoh,” Hannibal mumbled into his neck, “Abigail cannot be here.”

Will chuckled. “Well she can, but we won't notice her.”

Hannibal smiled with his nose against Will’s neck. “You smell intoxicating.”

“I haven’t had a real heat in years. The one I had before I was inseminated was...barely anything. But this...”

“Is going to be quite the event,” Hannibal finished, kissing his cheek.

“I could get pregnant again,” Will whispered, nuzzling him back.

“Mmm,” Hannibal purred, “You could. How do you feel about the idea?”

Will smiled. “I’m just barely under the age of fertility. I was surprised it happened the first time so fast so I doubt it’ll happen again, especially so soon.”

“But if it does?” Hannibal whispered, nuzzling him again as his knot began to go down.

“Mmm,” he sighed, “Then it does.”

Hannibal lifted his head and smiled, running his hand across Will’s cheek. “Is that the heat talking?”

He nuzzled Hannibal's hand. "Mmm?"

The knot that had kept him lucid went down entirely and Hannibal pulled out of Will making them both groan. Will pulled him in close again and he kissed Will's cheek. "Will, I think I need to call Chiyoh. I will take Abigail with me and pack her a bag."

Will whimpered. "Don't go."

Hannibal kissed his hand. "I will return, Mylimasis. I need you to wait in bed for me."

He whined as Hannibal let him go, and the sound of the door as he left the room Will's entire body ached at the loss. The emptiness he felt inside him felt unending and he rolled onto his back, ripping at the rest of his clothes.

"Alpha..."

Hannibal pushed back on their bond a few times while he was gone but it wasn't enough. He started to cry, tearing at the sheets, and fought a battle to stay.

What if his alpha left him and didn't return?

But why would he lie when Will was so ready to be filled?

The sound when the door opened made Will cry out, purring as he smelled Hannibal come into the room.

"Alpha..."

He could smell his alpha's arousal and rolled onto his belly presenting himself.

A deep growl made the slick gush from Will and he pushed out, purring as he smelled Hannibal come near.

“Beautiful.”

Will turned and felt his eyes fill with tears as he stared back at him. “Hannibal, *please* .”

The bed dipped in as Hannibal climbed in beside him. He pressed a kiss to Will's temple, breathing in the scent of him, and Will whimpered. “I've always wanted to experience this,” he whispered, “See you filled with such need.”

“Please...” he begged, “I...”

Hannibal began to kiss down Will's body and he arched up at every touch.

“Even your sweat tastes like need.”

“Alpha....”

Hannibal sucked on his nipples, licking at the drop of milk that dripped down and making Will whimper. He dug his nails into Hannibal's hair as he sucked.

“Oh god....oh...”

He lifted his head and his lips were white with milk. “You taste....heavenly.”

“Alpha please, I need...”

He continued down and began to lick Will's thighs, and Will groaned, pulling at Hannibal's hair again. “Alpha...”

“Can you feel how much I want you, Will?”

Will could feel his want, smell it, and each minute he wasn't given what he thought he might cry again. “Please, Alpha...please, I need your knot. I need...”

Sweat dripped down his forehead and made it hard for Will to see but he could feel. He felt everything so much.

“I know what you need.”

Hannibal dipped his tongue in Will's aching hole and he screamed, pulling on the alpha's hair hard. He began to thrust his tongue inside Will, a hard rhythm of tongue fucking that still felt like torture. Will sobbed, shaking as he kept on, and when Hannibal lifted his head Will could hardly see.

“Please, Alpha,” Will whimpered, “Please, I've been so good....I...I'm so good....please...”

He watched Hannibal's face fall as his alpha came up to touch Will's cheek.

“Will...I'm sorry I was...overwhelmed...I...you're perfect. Just perfect.”

“Fuck me?” Will asked, letting out a sob, “Please? Please I need...”

He turned Will onto his side and positioned himself just over Will's hole, whispering into his neck.

"I'll give you what you really need."

Will turned and grabbed his neck hard, digging nails into Hannibal's skin, and smashed their mouths together. He moaned when Hannibal slid into him and the slow hard thrusts were everything.

They came together just like he needed, and every thrust of Hannibal's cock was followed by a touch of his tongue. Will purred, shaking as they continued, and when they parted for breath he was still purring.

"Yes," he sighed, "Yes, yes, yes..."

Hannibal sucked on his mating bite and he felt the touch echo throughout his entire body.

"Feel me, Will," he whispered, "Feel us."

Will felt the echoes of their mutual need through the mating bond and tears started to fall down his cheeks. "Yesssss," he sighed, "Love you so much....need you so..."

"Oh, Will...I feel...I'm being overtaken by a rut."

The word made Will's instincts sing at the high praise if there ever was any for moments like this. Alphas didn't rut unless they wanted their omega so much they couldn't stop themselves. Will breathed in Hannibal's want and felt it in their bond. His own haze was already making it hard to concentrate, but he held firm. "Let it take you," he whispered, "Please, let it--"

Hannibal pulled nearly all the way out of him again only to thrust back in.

"Mine."

Hannibal quickened his thrusts, growling as he fucked Will harder, and he started to stroke Will's cock just as fast. "Oh god...don't...oh...."

He bit down on their mating bite again and Will groaned, shaking as the heat between them became scorching.

"Omega..."

Will knew the minute Hannibal went into rut. He felt it through their bond, and tears fell down his face. "Fuck me," he sighed, "Fill me," he whimpered, "Breed me!"

Hannibal turned him onto his back and began to fuck so fast the headboard started to shake. Will's vision blurred but he grabbed for Hannibal's hand and the rest was a complete blur.

He didn't remember anything at all until his heat finally faded days later.

"Will?"

Will nuzzled Hannibal's hand as he touched his cheek. "Mmm..."

"It's over, Mylimasis," Hannibal whispered, "Come back to me."

He smiled. "Mmm...I'm here."

Hannibal kissed him softly. "I can feel your coherence through the bond."

"Mmm..."

“That was....transcendent.”

Will laughed and felt his very overused ass ache as he moved. “For sure.”

“Do you remember?”

“I remember the start, but after your rut...nothing.”

“I apologize,” Hannibal murmured, “I...did not expect that. I thought I would be coherent but it lasted much longer than it should’ve.”

“How long?”

“Nearly the duration.”

Will felt warm all over just hearing that. “You wanted me that much?”

“Of course.”

He kissed Hannibal again. “How are we not starving?”

“I....may have...called in a favor.”

Will froze. “Hannibal...did Chiyoh...?”

“She stayed with us throughout. Will...”

He groaned into Hannibal’s neck. “Oh god that’s so embarrassing.”

“She was more than happy to help. I...compensated her for her assistance.”

“Is she still here?”

“Yes.”

“I’m not going down there.”

“Will...”

“I’m going to take a shower, and she better be gone by the time I get out.”

“She’ll think you rude.”

“That’s fine,” Will mumbled, pushing Hannibal off him, “I’m used to people thinking I’m rude. Just...let me get out of this heat with some dignity left.”

Hannibal wrapped his arms around Will from behind and kissed his mating bite.

“You have all your dignity, Mylimasis,” he whispered, “And you were...beautiful. Just beautiful.”

Will smiled and took Hannibal’s hands in his.

“I’ve never...inspired a rut before. Not ever.”

Hannibal scented his cheek and pressed his lips to Will’s ear. “I’m more than happy to be the one and only.”

“So am I.”

Will kissed both his hand and stood up, turning to smile at him. “I mean it, Alpha. No alpha aunt Chiyoh when I get out. I’ll...thank her later.”

Hannibal frowned. “As you wish.”

“I do wish.”

He watched Hannibal leave, grabbed his phone off the bedside table, and walked into the bathroom. The water got hot almost immediately but Will stopped to text.

Thank you.

Chiyoh responded immediately.

You’re welcome.

Will smiled as he got into the shower and closed his eyes as the remains of his heat went down the drain. He put two hands on his belly and stared down at them.

Was there a baby growing inside him now?

Maybe.

He doubted he could even still be fertile, but...wouldn't that be something?

Chapter 28

“I...need to go to the store.”

Hannibal frowned.

Will had never expressed desire to leave the house since his escape attempt that felt like a lifetime ago. He felt an odd worry that quickly dissolved when Will pushed on their bond, kissing Hannibal softly.

“Don’t,” Will whispered, nuzzling his cheek, “Don’t even *think* it. Where else would I go? Why would I go? I’ve never been this happy, Hannibal. Not once in my whole life.”

He smiled. “I apologize, I...”

Will kissed him again. “I know. I just...I need to do something, that’s all. Nothing bad.”

“You don’t feel comfortable telling me this...something?”

“No, it’s...a surprise.”

Hannibal frowned. “I see.”

“You can have daddy bonding time with Abby when I’m gone. It won’t be long, and...I’ll be safe. I promise.”

“I could ask Chiyoh to...”

“Chiyohn is closing up back at the castle, remember? You suggested it last week.”

“Yes, I...had forgotten.”

Chiyoh had been around them so often as of late that Hannibal had told her perhaps it was time to close up Lecter Castle for the year. They’d shared a look when she asked him a pointed question.

“Close up... *everything* ?”

Hannibal felt the finality of the very idea deep in his bones but nodded. “Yes.”

So she’d gone back to Lithuania, and would not be returning for a while yet.

“You won’t be gone long?”

“Not long, no,” Will said, kissing his cheek, “And I’ll have my phone. Plus all my fake IDs and my hair is too long now anyway no one will even recognize me.”

Hannibal ran his fingers through Will’s curls and smiled. “No, they would not.”

“You will tell me this... *something* eventually?”

“I promise.”

And that, was *that* .

Hannibal found himself alone with Abigail for the very first time, and things were going quite well. She had her bottle, diaper change, and nap within the first twenty minutes of Will

being gone. He spent the rest of the hour cleaning, his instincts still a bit rattled, and when Abigail woke he tended to her again.

“Your father will be home soon,” he promised, rocking her in his arms.

Will did not return for nearly two hours.

He had given Will a cellular phone in case of emergency when he himself was gone but refused to show his worry by calling him. They were mates now, and Will was no longer his prisoner.

Will’s arrival was noticed by the dogs before Hannibal heard the gate being buzzed open. He had Abigail in her chair by then, calmly dozing, and when the door opened Hannibal attempted to keep himself calm through their bond.

The dogs all barked excitedly and Will’s laugh made Hannibal relax for the first time in hours.

.

“Wow, looks like someone missed me.”

He turned and saw Will had several bags in his arms. The flushed cheeks of someone being out in the cold made him want to warm Will but he kept seated on the couch. “Yes, someone did.”

Will smiled, setting down a few bags and pulling out a bag of dog biscuits. “Siiit!”

He then proceeded to give all eight dogs a treat. Hannibal frowned.

“I thought you were just obtaining one item.”

He shook his head. "I was nearby anyway so..."

Hannibal sniffed. "And you...seem to have eaten... *fast* food."

Will rolled his eyes. "I was hungry, *Alpha* ," he sighed, "And I haven't had anything greasy in months. I had a craving for fries."

He frowned. "I could've made you anything you wished for and---"

"Hannibal... *don't* . Okay? It was just food."

"Did you obtain what you were looking for?"

Will smiled. "Yes. I'm...", he grabbed one of the bags, "I'll be right back. I gotta go to the bathroom."

Hannibal watched him go up the stairs and still felt rather lost. He pushed at their bond and was suddenly met with a block.

Why was Will blocking him?

He looked at Abigail. "I think your father is angry with me."

She wiggled a bit in her chair but kept on sleeping.

"I'm unsure of what I did to upset him, Mažasis , but I will make amends."

Hannibal leaned back on the couch and stared up the stairs. Perhaps Will was feeling ill?

Abigail began to cry and he lifted Abigail from the chair where she lay, rocking her back and forth. Hannibal looked at the clock against the wall.

It had been nearly twenty minutes.

Hannibal was ready to when suddenly he felt a shock come through his and Will's bond. He felt Will's sudden elation through the connection and frowned.

A moment later Will came out into the hall.

"Will, what's happened?"

He stood at the top of the stairs with tears on his face holding something Hannibal couldn't see in his hand.

"Will?"

Will said nothing as he came down the stairs and then opened up his hand.

Two home pregnancy tests.

Both positive.

Hannibal stared at the sticks, then at Will who seemed suddenly unsure through their bond.

“Mylimasis....”

“I wasn’t sure, but it felt like I was but I didn’t want to disappoint you so...”

He blinked back tears as he reached out to touch Will’s cheek.

“Will...I...”

“Now you can be here for all of it, Alpha,” Will whispered, coming closer to press his cheek against Hannibal’s, “All the mood swings, morning sickness, cravings...all of it.”

Hannibal stared down at Abigail. “This...is the best surprise you could’ve given me.”

Will kissed his mating bite before lifting his head up.

“Yeah?”

He leaned in and pressed their lips together softly.

“Yes. I’m very happy.”

“Me too,” Will said, “So, so happy.”

“I love you, Mylimasis. More and more everyday.”

Will kissed Hannibal again and nuzzled his cheek.

“I love you too, Alpha.”

Hannibal took Will’s hand as he walked down the last two stairs. They sat together on the couch and Abigail started to cry again. Will laughed. “Give her here,” he whispered, “I... need...”

Hannibal gave over and Will raised his shirt up for feeding. His chest ached as he watched them. The dogs all tried to get their attention again and Will smiled.

“Two kids, eight dogs, and...”

He kissed Will’s temple and squeezed their hands together.

“Two elated true mates who will love each other so deeply that no one could match them. A beautiful omega who is the most perfect being on earth and an alpha...who worships the ground he walks on.”

Hannibal felt Will’s love through their bond as he looked at him with tears falling down his face. “What would we have done without you?”

“Lived a normal life?”

Will shook his head. “A lonely life. A half life. A...”

Hannibal put a hand on Will’s belly as he leaned in to kiss him again. He pushed all his feeling for Will through their bond.

No more words were needed.

They'd said them all.

Chapter 29

EPILOGUE

Will's routine over the past five years had changed drastically.

Gone were the days of sleepy babies, late night feedings, and inconvenient heats. Now he spent his days teaching his children the things he'd wished someone had taught him, and watching his mate attempt to do the same in between cooking them child friendly meals. Their lives weren't quiet, at least not until late night hours, and even then if they wanted to do more than just gentle kisses they had to keep themselves silent as well.

He had long since learned to muffle his moans.

It wasn't a perfect life, not even a little, but it was a happy one.

Isolation was safe, and though he knew someday their kids would have to leave the nest for now he was content to bask in the love of his family. They flourished in their secret haven, his disappearance long past relevance, and despite everything that had led him here he was fine to remain that way.

Which was why when Hannibal dropped the tablet into his lap it felt like his whole world shattered.

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He looked up at Hannibal's grim expression, then back to the kids where they ate their sandwiches. Abby whispered something to Dante and he watched his son spit food across the four thousand dollar children's table Hannibal had insisted they buy.

“No.”

“Will...”

Will scrolled down the page, and saw a house he did not recognize. He frowned. “What is this?”

Hannibal sat down next to him on the couch and pulled Will in close. “It is the home I rented when I left you alone after...”

He froze. “How...why would she even connect this to you?”

Hannibal frowned. “It has since changed hands and the new owners...discovered a sketchbook I left behind. The book was filled with pictures I’d sketched of you.”

Will’s lip curled. “Will it lead here?”

“No,” Hannibal whispered, nuzzling his cheek, “No, I promise you. It was far enough away that this house’s connection would be impossible to make but...this means...Freddie Lounds is in Italy.”

He pushed Hannibal back roughly letting the tablet fall to the floor. “Are you seriously suggesting...?”

“Daddy! DADDY LOOK AT WHAT DANTE IS DOING!”

They both looked to see Dante feeding Buster the remains of his sandwich. “Dante, no! I told you not to feed the dogs people food!”

Dante's face fell as Will glared at him. "But Dad..."

"No," Will said, his voice thick, "I said no. Go to your room."

"But..."

"Go," Hannibal said, "Listen to your father."

Will watched the sun shine off his son's blonde hair and his red brown eyes were filled with tears. "I'm sorry."

"I know, Mažasis," Hannibal whispered, "But you need to go."

Dante walked up the stairs and Will watched him until he went into his bedroom. His heart ached when he looked at Abigail, who was eating nicely and talking to Buster who looked ready for more.

"You can't possibly be thinking of this."

"Will..."

He felt a tear fall down his face. "Are you that ready to lose everything?"

Hannibal frowned. "You wanted her dead as much as I," he whispered, his voice coming out in a hiss, "And this is an opportunity that--"

Will stood up and stomped across the living room into the kitchen. He didn't want Abigail to see him cry and he knew when Hannibal followed it would only get worse.

“Will...”

He rounded on him angrily. “Are you that desperate to murder again that you’d throw us away? What if they find you? What if...they take you away? I’ll...I can’t do this alone. I...”

Hannibal touched his cheek. “You have such little faith in me?”

Will slapped his hand away. “Oh fuck you,” he spat, “Just...whatever, just GO. Go chop her up into tiny little pieces and let the cops come get you. We had a good five years, that’s enough right?”

He moved to leave the kitchen and Hannibal blocked his path. “Will...”

“GO!” he yelled, pushing him back, “JUST GO!”

Hannibal growled, rushing out of the kitchen and Will’s heart broke when he heard the door slam behind him.

Will went back into the living room to find Abigail curled up in a corner with Winston. She had tears running down her cheeks. “Abby, what’s...”

“Is Daddy going away forever? Did Daddy make you cry?”

He picked her up in his arms and sat on the couch. She sniffled in his ear.

“Baby, it’s...”

“Daddy?”

Will turned to see Dante on the stairs. His eyes were wide.

“It’s gonna be okay, baby. C’mere.”

Dante came over to the couch and Will gathered them both up into his arms. He felt tears falling down his face and he wiped them off. “It’s gonna be okay, Daddy and I just...had a fight.”

“Do you hate him now?” Abby asked.

Will sighed, shaking his head. “No, I don’t hate him.”

“Did he make you mad?”

He ran his fingers through Dante’s hair. “Yes, baby. He made me mad.”

They lay there quiet for a moment and Will tried to calm the pain he was feeling. The kids would feel the fear in him too if he let it get too much. He couldn't do that to them. He sniffled as the dogs all tried to climb up on the ends of the couch but there were too many. He laughed.

“I think we need a bigger couch.”

Abby nuzzled Will’s cheek. “I’ll make you feel better, Dad.”

“Abby...”

“Can you tell us the story again? About you and Daddy?”

Will’s chest hurt. “Honey, I don’t think…”

He heard the door open behind him and Will froze.

“Daddy! Daddy come tell us the story!”

Will heard Hannibal’s footsteps echo on the wood floor as he got closer to them.

“I’m not the best at telling the story, little ones,” he purred, “But your father…is excellent at it.”

Will closed his eyes as Hannibal ran fingers across his mating mark. He pushed all the relief and love he had in him back through their bond as Hannibal kissed his cheek. “Aren’t you, Mylimasis?”

He looked up at him. “I can try.”

Hannibal walked around the couch and paused when he saw how crowded it was.

“I see there’s very little space for me.”

Will laughed. “C’mon dogs! Off! Dante, move over baby so Daddy can sit with us.”

Hannibal sat down next to Will and pulled him in close. He scented Will’s cheek and whispered so softly the kids didn’t hear. “I could never, Will, not ever. Nothing is more

important to me than all of you. Nothing.”

Will let out a sob as Hannibal nuzzled his cheek. “I...”

“TELL US! I WANNA HEAR THE STORY!”

He laughed and wiped his face. “Okay, okay. Give me a second. Once upon a time, there was an omega that thought no one would ever want him but he wanted a baby...and there was an alpha...who no one wanted...who came to bring their family together but ended up giving him everything.”

Hannibal turned Will’s head and kissed him softly. “Your father has it wrong, little ones...the omega...he’s the one who gave the alpha everything.”

Will smiled at him. “Everything?”

“Well...there were a few times where...a friend helped.”

He laughed. “Auntie Chiyoh did help a lot, didn’t she?”

“Yes,” Hannibal said, “And she’s coming to dinner tomorrow...she promised to bring something...ginger spiced.”

Will kissed him again. “That sounds... *perfect* .”

Hannibal smiled and touched his cheek. “I told her I had...more important things to worry about than procuring dinner.”

He pressed his cheek against Hannibal’s. “Alpha...”

Abigail tugged on Will's shirt and he looked down at her. "Dad?"

"Yes, baby?"

"Are you not mad at Daddy anymore?"

Will shook his head. "No, I'm...very happy with your Daddy."

Hannibal took Will's hand. "Do not worry, Mažasis, Daddy just forgot for a moment that he doesn't have to go elsewhere to fill the ache he has inside him....as long as there's a place for him here, he has everything he needs already. Though there may not always be room for me on the ever crowded couch."

Will pressed a kiss to Hannibal's mating bite and nuzzled his cheek. "Don't worry. We're always gonna make room for you, Daddy. Always."

Hannibal pushed all his love at their bond and Will blinked back tears. "That's all I need to hear."

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